Information for Social Change

"an activist organisation that examines issues of censorship, freedom and ethics amongst library and information workers..."

ISC 22, Winter 2005/2006

The newspaper industry and the powerful effect of language; Cuba – libraries and computers; globalisation – health, libraries, information and education; social exclusion and colonialism; social class and public libraries; academic freedom; Social Action in Library and Information work worldwide; the UK Government's Education White Paper; Quebec and writing for the information sector

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Editorial by Ruth Rikowski and John Pateman

Welcome to ISC 22. We have another packed issue, on a wide variety of themes on radical library and information subjects around the world. Topics include the newspaper industry; Cuba; globalisation; social exclusion and colonialism; social class and public libraries; academic freedom; social action in library and information work worldwide; the UK government's education White Paper, Quebec and writing for the information sector.

The next few issues will be themed issues, on a variety of topics, the first of which will be on the subject of *Education for Social Change* and will be guest edited by Glenn Rikowski, who is a leading alternative thinker and activist in the field of education. The following issue (winter 2006/07) will be based on the conference proceedings of the Library Workshop at the World Social Forum and will be guest edited by Mikael Böök and Kingsley Oghojafor, who will both also be participating in the event. If you would like to suggest a theme and guest edit a future issue of ISC, then please let us know.

We begin this issue with an article entitled ***Cuba and Computers*** by **Dana Lubow** helps to dispel the myth that computers and the internet are banned in Cuba and that all information is controlled by the state. The biggest threat to intellectual freedom and the flow of information in Cuba is the illegal US blockade which has now been in place for over 40 years. As Dana points out:

> *Despite this reality, computers and access to the internet are part of Cuban life. They are prioritised for use in places where utilisation is on a collective and massive scale, such as in elementary and secondary schools, which have a ratio of 20 students per computer, universities, health and cultural centres and many other social institutions. Even children in preschools have computer access to educational software. There are 600 Computer and Electronic Youth Clubs in existence throughout the country.*

Young people in Cuba also have access to an excellent state run public library service and this is the subject of the article on ***Shaping Our Future: Library Services for Youth***. **Miguel Viciedo** Valdes works at the Ruben Martinez Villena Public Library in Havana and his article looks at the library needs of young people in the city. Cuba actively involves and engages local communities in the planning, design, delivery and evaluation of library services:

> *In Cuba the public libraries throughout the country, as well as other cultural institutions, have carried out this type of study in order to understand their user's preferences and to be able to design or redesign the services including the cultural programming they offer their communities and to establish work strategies that correspond to the preferences of their users and the role and mission of each library.*

As part of a Socialist state that is working towards Communism, Cuban libraries have started to implement the Marxist principle of "From each according to their ability, to each according to their needs". Cuban libraries have the appropriate strategies,

structures and organisational culture which enable them to identify, prioritise and meet community needs. Getting the culture right – "the way we do things around here" – is essential. But, as **Annette de Faveri** points out in her article, librarians are often mired in a *Culture of Comfort*. In other words, the attitudes and behaviours of some librarians and library staff can be one of the most significant barriers to widening library use:

> *The library's culture of comfort lets us define our communities as the people who use our services, and who know and like us. Our responsibility to the community is discharged when we meet the needs of these patrons. We then evaluate and measure our success by surveying individuals who use the library. By definition these are people who find the library supportive of the issues that matter to them and who see the library reflecting the values and social structures that they are comfortable with. This self reinforcing loop lets us mask exclusionary library practices by claiming that we respond to community feedback, and that we serve all the people who want to be served.*

Annette compares this culture of comfort to a culture of colonialism. And like colonialism it assumes that the colonizers understand the needs of the colonised better than they do themselves. In this analogy, the colonisers are the white, confident, articulate middle class; and the colonised are the disempowered working class, the socially excluded, Black communities and other marginalised groups.

Annette's article is from a Canadian perspective, as is the piece by **Brian Campbell** on *"IN" versus "WITH" the Community: Using a Community Development Approach to Public Library Service*. Brian looks at the differences between community outreach (working in the community) and community development (working with the community):

Outreach supports detachment, but community development requires risk. Community development looks into the library rather than the other way around. It changes community perceptions of librarians and libraries and deals with communities and individuals not as fragments or episodes but as a totality. It requires engagement and personal vulnerability rather than static or official plans. Outreach is an extension of our present business model. Community development is a rich and complex approach that evolves innovative models of librarianship and sustainable communities.

Annette and Brian are both involved in the Working Together: Library-Community Connections Project (March 2004-April 2008). The main objects of this project are to: create Community Development Librarian posts; develop techniques for working with the community; develop strategies to assist libraries in responding to systemic barriers to the socially excluded; develop a toolkit for Canadian libraries to use in creating community development strategies and working with the socially excluded. More information about the Working Together Project can be found in *Feliciter* (journal of the Canadian Library Association), Vol. 51, No. 6 (2005).

Social class is the biggest determinant of success and progress in capitalist societies and **John Pateman** continues his series on social class and public libraries in his article, *Mind the Gap*. This is the title of a book by Ferdinand Mount:

> *There is something peculiar about the British attitude to class, some contradiction or unease. On the one hand, we say that class is a thing of the past or rapidly becoming so…Anyone can now pass so freely from one part of society to another that the barriers, such as they are, are no longer to be taken seriously. On the other hand we continue to 'mind the gap'…*

Class is just as important today as it was in 1848 when Karl Marx and Frederick Engels wrote *The Communist Manifesto*. Those who say that class no longer exists or "we are all middle class now", can afford to be dismissive of class because they themselves are middle class and hold all the power in society. There are lower rates of social mobility in the UK than in most parts of Europe. Social mobility has slowed down considerably and is actually now in decline. Someone like myself, who was born in the 1950s and went to university in the 1970s, was more socially mobile than my son who was born in the 1990's. Another thing that has gone is the respect which used to exist between the classes. If the middle class are not denying that the working class still exist, they are laughing at and despising them as ignorant, flashy "chavs". As the "white flight" by the middle class from cities continues to accelerate we will have an increasingly polarised society between the haves and have nots. The answer lies in giving the working class back more power and control over their lives:

> *This could have a dramatic effect on public libraries and force or encourage them to take a needs based approach to service delivery. In a recent opinion poll more than two thirds of British adults considered themselves to be working class. Putting power and control back into their hands would give working class people a majority stake and say in how public libraries are managed and delivered.*

Keith Nockells has written an interesting piece about the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) and how this relates to health care – the GATS being about the liberalisation of trade in services. There is a need for an analysis of how the GATS is likely to impact on all the different public service sectors. Ruth Rikowski has done this for libraries, and has written many articles for ISC on the subject. We are now very pleased to have this contribution from Keith, considering the impact of the GATS on health. We would also welcome contributions from others, examining a variety of public service sectors, such as education, housing, social services etc. and the likely impact of the GATS on these different service sectors. Keith begins his article by briefly explaining what the GATS is and an outline of some of the complexities in the agreement. This includes listing the four 'modes' of trade in services – namely, cross border supply, consumption abroad, commercial presence and presence of natural persons. Then, he goes on to provide a very useful annotated bibliography of the GATS and health.

Ruth Rikowski's article in this issue is entitled ***Traditional knowledge and TRIPS.*** Traditional knowledge (TK) is usually associated with knowledge that has been gathered over a long period amongst local, indigenous communities in the developing world. Ruth considers how the World Trade Organisation's TRIPS agreement (the agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights) is likely to impact on this traditional knowledge. She explains that much TK in the developing world is not even recorded, thus it cannot be copyright protected, or made available in a local library or resource centre. Meanwhile, this offers ripe opportunities for large

corporations to move in and appropriate this knowledge, often without giving due recompense to the local population. As Ruth says:

> *The TRIPS agreement does not refer to traditional knowledge specifically, but clearly the TRIPS is going to impact on TK. As it stands, large corporations in the west can easily appropriate traditional knowledge in the developing world, transform it into an intellectual property right, (in particular, it is often patented), make money out of it, but not compensate the original creators of this traditional knowledge.*

Thus, large companies patent this knowledge and transform it into an intellectual property right and these patents are then traded in the market-place. TRIPS with its emphasis on the ***trading*** of intellectual property rights, will greatly assist with this whole process, Ruth emphasises. In essence, TRIPS is about transforming intellectual property rights into international tradable commodities. These commodities are sold in the market-place, and thus capitalism is sustained and perpetuated, whilst labour is exploited, and within this overall scenario those in the developing world will suffer in particular.

There then follows an article by **Alpesh Maisuria**, entitled *Sexy Words, Iconic Phrases and slippery terms – it's all newspaper talk: a theoretical analysis of the language used by the newspaper industry to manifest and perpetuate discourse*. Alpesh explores the range of positions adopted by newspapers to a variety of issues and then considers who profits from the underlying message that is being presented.

He argues that we need to adopt critical thought to the media, and seek to demonstrate that newspapers are ideological institutions which are designed to serve specific ideological objectives. He says that:

> *The media is an enterprise of inequality, because media corporations have the capacity to suppress contestation and alternative views by exploiting their power to galvanise specific discourses.* (p.1 [57])

He also critiques the liberation theory, which newspapers can sometimes cleverly seem to be subscribing to, saying that:

> *Acting as though they are subscribing to the liberation theory – providing a voice to the voiceless, newspapers can advance their ideological position, whilst appearing to be representing those who are dispossessed near the bottom of the power hierarchical structure in society.* (p. 14 {71})

The paper aims to show that in order to effectively critique society and to challenge the gross inequalities that it engenders, there is a need to understand the mechanisms that perpetuate it, which includes an analysis of the newspaper industry itself.

Toni Samek has recently joined the ISC Editorial Board and we are delighted to have two contributions from her in this issue. Firstly, an article which provides some information about her forthcoming book (2006) with Chandos publishers, which is entitled *Librarianship and Human Rights: a 21st Century Guide.* Secondly, a report of a conference that she attended on Academic Freedom Post 9-11, in September

2005. Toni's first piece, **Tracking Social Action in Library and Information Work Worldwide**, outlines some of the main aspects that will be covered in her forthcoming book. She begins by considering the concept of 'intellectual freedom'. As she says:

> *We grapple continuously with intellectual freedom issues at countless fronts on local, national and international levels: commercialization of public space, copyright and access to information...self-censorship and information suppression, social exclusion...transborder data flow, implications of World Trade Organization's agreements such as GATS and TRIPS, freedom of inquiry... and a global infrastructure of mass registration and surveillance.*

This is also obviously linked to concepts such as freedom of opinion and expression, access to information and freedom of speech. Toni's book is intended to be of practical help for library and information workers around the world, as they seek to grapple with these issues, and to look for alternatives. As she says in regard to her book, it:

> *... is grounded in practical, critical, and emancipatory terms: social action is a central theme.*

Toni considers 50 discrete forms of action to assist with this. These include, for example, alternative action programs, alternative conference programs, blogs, books, boycotts, campaigns, disaster response, educative approaches, petitions, position statements, resolutions, speeches etc etc. She concludes by saying that:

> *...social action in the context of library and information work involves both so-called "mainstream" and progressive pushes. Historically, the profession's claim to library neutrality drew a line between library issues and so-called non-library issues. This line has been paralleled in a categorical division between library advocacy and library activism. Hopefully, 'Librarianship and Human Rights' will help to blur these artificial lines – and to expose them as both counter-intuitive and counter-productive to the very nature of our work.*

Academic Freedom Post 9-11: An Issues Report is the title of Toni's piece about the conference on academic freedom which was organised by the Harry Crowe Foundation and the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) in September 2005. Many issues were discussed including the rights and responsibilities of scholars on areas such as the corporatization of the university, secrecy in research, commodification of education, and ideological controls. Various conditions for the production and transmission of new knowledge were also considered, such as full and frank debate, creativity and freedom of expression. The report ends with two statements – one from the Canadian Library Association on Intellectual Freedom and one from the Canadian Association of University Teachers, which is a policy statement on Academic Freedom. The Canadian Library Association statement states that:

> *All persons in Canada have the fundamental right...to have access to all expressions of knowledge, creativity and intellectual activity, and to express*

> *their thoughts publicly...Librarians have a basic responsibility for the development and maintenance of intellectual freedom.*

We also have an article by **Ruth Rikowski and Glenn Rikowski** about the UK Government's education White Paper, which was published on 25th October 2005. Glenn participated in a discussion on the White Paper on the same day, on *The World Tonight,* on BBC Radio 4. This article summarises some of the main points that were discussed on the programme, and provides further analysis on the White Paper. It emphasises that the White Paper paves the way for the 'business takeover of schools'. It also highlights how this is part of a much bigger global agenda, which is fundamentally about transforming services (which includes Library Services and Education Services) into international tradable commodities. This is coming into effect through the World Trade Organisation's General Agreement on Trade and Services (GATS). However, as Ruth and Glenn make clear, to fully understand what is going on here, we need to return to Marx, and to appreciate the fact that any analysis of capitalism must begin with the commodity.

Paul Catherall, who became our webmaster in the summer of this year, and is now also on the Editorial Board, has a piece in this issue, entitled ***Starting to write for the information sector: some experiences***. Paul outlines how he became involved in writing for the information sector, as well as giving some advice to others that are considering or starting out on the writing path. As he says:

> *For those interested in writing, I would recommend starting to write about topics where you have developed knowledge or expertise, rather than an area about which you are unfamiliar...*

Furthermore, that it is often better to start off by writing a short piece, rather than just "plunging into a full-scale text". Paul's first book, entitled *Delivering E-Learning for Information Services in Higher Education* was published with Chandos publishing in 2004.

There are 3 pieces in this issue by **Julian Samuel**, which are all about Quebec nationalism and racialism. They are entitled ***Quebec's heart of darkness, Room at the Top*** and ***Quebec's Minorities***.

Julian Samuel's first piece *Quebec's heart of darkness,* considers Franco-Ontarian Daniel Poliquin's essay on Quebec nationalism. Poliquin examines the concept of Quebec nationalism in some detail. Samuel notes that there is 'cultural apartheid' in Quebec and that:

> *In Quebec, there is wall-to-wall white, pre-rational modernity. This aggressive/defensive class of technical media intellectuals...will not publish any historical, political or cultural criticism.*

He also emphasizes how right-wing and nationalistic the newspapers are. Samuel says that he disagrees with Poliquin to the extent that he does not think that that is any such thing as Quebec "nationalism" as such. Instead, he says that:

> *The term 'nationalist' cannot be used to describe Quebecois separatists. In political nomenclature, parties such as the Partie Québécois, Bloc Québécois are not at all nationalists: they are, properly speaking, revolutionary Provincialists (read ethnic nationalists).*

Also, he does not think that Poliquin goes far enough in his critique of Quebec's ethnic nationalists. He concludes by saying that Poliquin:

> *…like those who came before him, talk incessantly of their own culture as something detached from a multiracial Canada which is expanding, not narrowing its definition of citizenship…A subsequent book might breach those unassailable parameters that have limited Poliquin's current work on Quebec's ethnic nationalists.*

Thus, although Julian Samuel has some reservations about Poliquin's work on Quebec nationalism, he clearly thinks that his work is important and that it is something that should be built on.

The second article by Julian Samuel is called *Room at the top: cultural bodies in Quebec lack any minority representation.* Samuel asks why there are not any visible minorities in key positions at Quebec cultural institutions, and why is it so far behind the rest of Canada on this matter. He also ponders whether the nearly all-white local media block any public discussion on this issue. He says:

> *In Quebec, decision-making in most media outlets are white. Blacks appear on the covers of the alternative weeklies if they can rap or do house, but there is little substantive coverage of the issue of racism in Quebec cultural institutions.*

He goes on to say that:

> *The inexorable exclusion of minorities from key positions within cultural institutions is due to the tribal desire to pass on the best jobs to incumbent white elites, friends and family members.*

Yet, if there were more critical and talented minorities in these key positions:

> *Quebec could produce a challenging and refined internationalized culture.*

Samuel concludes by saying that:

> *Quebec culture would be irreversibly altered if creative visible minorities were allowed to have a say in the direction of cultural production. By maintaining the status quo, only white Quebec will benefit, the exclusion of minorities will make for bitterness and stagnation.*

Thus, Samuel makes a very important and powerful argument in this article – that there are not enough visible minorities in various cultural activities in Quebec and that instead it is too white-dominated. Therefore, that Quebec culture would benefit from

the inclusion of more minorities, providing a varying, challenging, and critical perspective.

The third piece by Julian Samuel is called *Quebec's minorities: trapped between two solitudes,* and Samuel considers the Paris Quebecois project and Yves Michaud. He says that:

> *The PQ will continue to make racial and linguistic distinctions between citizens...*

Later he refers to the white dominance in Quebec and says that simply putting a few token minorities in the media does not solve the race issue.

> *Visible minority demands are a thorn in the side of Quebec's white anglo elites. By placing a few handsome, smiling minorities on TV they think they have confronted and resolved the race issue. Who are they kidding?*

Thus, all these 3 pieces expose the racialism that exists in Quebec, and demonstrate how the whites dominate. Furthermore, that there are few ethnic minorities in different cultural activities, and where they do exist they are really only a token gesture.

There are also **film reviews** of 3 films in this issue – **Shooting Imperialism, Bowling for Columbine** and **The Tree that Remembers**.

In **Shooting Imperialism**, Cecilia Morgan reviews 3 documentaries by Julian Samuel. She begins by saying that much has been written in the recent past about colonialism, imperialism and postcolonialism but that:

> *Julian Samuel's work challenges us to consider the possibilities and limitations of the place of film as a medium to explore these issues.*

She is a historian who has been used to dealing with text, so she was curious to see how film could deal with these topics.

The 3 films are largely about Islam and its relationship to the West, although other colonial relationships are also discussed, such as Central Africa, Hong Kong, the Caribbean and India. She notes that Samuel undertakes a lot of interviewing throughout his films. Morgan says that:

> *The documentaries also seek to explore not just the 'construction' of an imagined and fantasy-ridden 'Orient' but they also seek to reverse these mirror images of East and explore what the 'West' meant to it.*

Samuel also considers culture and Morgan says that he:

> *…links aspects of culture – language, symbol, image, metaphor, and narrative – to the material aspects of imperial expansion and resistance…Yet cultural symbolism and imagery are important not only for their ability to illuminate power relations: they can also be used to explore cultural differences.*

She says that much of what is discussed in the documentaries is not new in theoretical and conceptual forms, but the format in which they are presented is '…a particularly compelling and intriguing one'. Morgan concludes by saying:

> *…Samuel brings considerable skill, creativity, and political acuity to this area of historical research. These films not only remind us that their themes are by no means 'over and done with' but they also suggest new ways of imagining – despite the difficulties involved – a more truly 'postcolonial' future.*

Thus, clearly, Cecilia Morgan thinks that Samuel's films provide a valuable contribution and a different dimension in regard to our understanding and appreciation of colonialist issues. Films can capture and express certain ideas and feelings in a way that it is not possible to convey in other media forms.

There are also **film reviews** of two other films. The first is a film review of *Bowling for Columbine,* by Julian Samuel. Secondly, there are two film reviews of the film **The Tree that Remembers**. One is by Julian Samuel and the other is by Pat Dillon.

In regard to **Bowling for Columbine**, directed by Michael Moore*,* Julian Samuel begins by questioning whether an apartheid system is re-emerging in America, where there is one rule for whites and another for non-whites. **Bowling for Columbine** considers these issues, and so it is an important and progressive film, Samuel says. However, Samuel also has some criticisms of the film. He argues that:

> *'Bowling for Columbine' shows that Americans, even critical ones like Moore, are profoundly obsessed with their own national problems and only minimally expose their government's dictator-loving foreign policy. Americans come first, even in Moore's world.*

Moore highlights the fact that American elites have killed people all over the world, but Samuel says that Moore does not provide a very balanced approach when giving examples in regard to this.
Samuel continues saying that:

> *…Americans have tons of guns; that America is violent…[but that] These are a limited series of conclusions after 125 minutes, don't you think? But he is addressing the masses. He has to keep it simple.*

At least, this is the justification that inactive intellectuals use to defend Moore's lack of depth and courage as a documentary film-maker, Samuel suggests – the need to address the masses. Julian Samuel concludes with a rather amusing comment, saying:

> *Ask away, Mr Moore, you're an American. The world's your oyster.*

Finally, there are 2 reviews of ***The Tree that Remembers***, which was directed by Masoud Raouf – one by Julian Samuel and one by Pat Dillon. This film won the Silver Award for Best Canadian Documentary and Gold Award at Yorktown. Raouf interviewed Iranian exiles that were imprisoned and tortured and who now live in Canada.

The first review is by Julian Samuel and he says that the interviews in the film display the suffering of the Iranians and that this is supposed to touch us on a personal level, but that there is no real political or historical analysis. Samuel then goes on to say that:

> *By not exposing Canada's role in supporting Iranian dictatorships, sentimental films such as 'The Tree that Remembers' actually perpetuate the suffering of Iranian people, their suffering is presented as something out there in the far away blue yonder, as something not connected to Canada. Their suffering is very much connected to what Canada does in terms of trade relations and foreign policy. This film does a profound disservice to the people who were and who are currently being brutalized; it tries to be poetic rather than expose arms trade deals and bankrupt foreign policy.*

In contrast, in Pat Dillon's review the interviews are referred to in the following way:

> *Blending their testimony with historical footage and original artwork, Raouf honours the memory of the dead and celebrates the resilience of the living.*

Pat Dillon thinks that the film demonstrates oppression and survival clearly, but that through this it also offers some rays of hope.

In **conclusion**, film can be an effective and an alternative media source for highlighting and exposing the gross inequalities that exist in the world, and for helping us to understand and critique society and to view the situation through a different lens. This will strengthen our position to enable us to challenge the global capitalist and colonialist agenda, and to look towards an alternative.

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Cuba: Computers, Automation, and the Internet

Dana Lubow

This article is dedicated to the students at the University of Computer Sciences, Cuba

Cuba's critics, the detractors, the anti-Cuban right continue to have an extremely difficult time acknowledging the Cuban reality today in the realm of computers and information technology. The denials continue to be regurgitated, refusing to admit to the very existence of computers and automation and their use and availability to Cubans in the health profession, in education, and to the general populace in Cuba. This follows the same pattern of ignoring Cuba's other achievements in health care, education, and the many other areas including hurricane protection, all which have been attained despite 45 years of blockade/embargo. Instead, the same tired, over-utilized, unproven arguments are trotted out about how the average person doesn't have access to computers and the Internet, that's it's tightly regulated - too expensive for most Cubans to use the few that do exist – and only foreigner visitors can afford them, etc. etc. etc.

An online forum titled, Cuba and the Information Society, (http://embacu.cubaminrex.cu/foroscubaminrex/), sponsored by the Cuban Ministry of Information Technology and Communications held November 11, 2005, sought to correct many of the misconceptions circulating around the world about the reality of computers and Internet access in Cuba. The discussion fully demonstrated today's reality of information technology in Cuba and the use and wide availability of computers and automation for health professionals, in education, and the population at large. Minister Ignacio González Planas, participated, answering questions and providing information. The forum was designed to address a concept that is excluded in many parts of the world from the majority of the inhabitants of the planet, marginalizing them from technological advances. Most can't even read. It was noted that there are more Internet connections and, consequently, users in Manhattan alone then on the entire African continent. One hundred years after the invention of the telephone, more than 50% of the world's population still doesn't have access to a telephone. The "digital divide" is seen as a reflection of the unjust international economic order in the world. This is not the case in Cuba. Despite its economic struggles, the utilization of information and communication technologies function to attain a society based on knowledge and the full rights of its entire people on equal terms.

There were over 200 participants from all over the world, including Cambodia, England, Greece, Guinea Conakry, Haiti, Jamaica, Kenya, Mexico, Russia, Switzerland, and the

United States, among others in addition to Cubans. Participants included several professors from a variety of disciplines from various universities in Cuba and other countries, many Cuban students in computer science, as well as professionals from various fields.

Any discussion about any aspect of life in Cuba, including computers and information technology, cannot avoid the reality of the U.S. blockade/embargo (the word's use depends on who is on the giving or the receiving end) and the topic came up over 75 times during the two-hour online discussion. Over and over again the blockade was indicated as the overlying reason why the lack of computers and access to them exists in Cuba. This criminal policy permeates all economic spheres of the country including industry and computer science education. It impedes the acquisition of computer applications and software from U.S. companies who are the most important in this arena. The blockade creates difficulties in the development of information and communication technologies and considerably increases the cost of any investment, requiring Cuba to look for alternatives in more distant markets. It has prevented Cuba from connecting to the Internet by means of a fiber optic oceanic cable that passes close by the island, forcing them to utilize satellite connections that are not only more expensive but have less bandwidth, making the connections slower. A map that shows the oceanic fiber optic cables surrounding Cuba can be found here: http://www.bnjm.cu/librinsula/2005/noviembre/99/dossier/dossier183.htm

It has impeded the development of a satisfactory computer infrastructure throughout the island. Purchasing licenses for proprietary software is difficult. Computer donations from within the United States are prohibited by U.S. law and have even recently been confiscated by the U.S. Department of Commerce at the U.S.- Mexico borders this last August, when the Pastors for Peace attempted to take them out of the country, destined for Cuba. It wasn't until 1996 that Cuba was even able to connect to the Internet due to the blockade.

Despite this reality, computers and access to the Internet are part of Cuban life. . They are prioritized for use in places where utilization is on a collective and massive scale, such as in elementary and secondary schools, which have a ratio of 20 students per computer, universities, health and cultural centers and many other social institutions. Even children in preschools have computer access to educational software. There are 600 Computer and Electronic Youth Clubs (http://www.jovenclub.cu/) in existence throughout the country. These are places where everybody of all ages can not only access computers and the Internet, but can also take short courses in order to learn how to use them. Over one million people have already availed themselves of these classes. There is a health network of more than 35,000 users which doctors who are working abroad can access. A third-year computer engineering student put it quite aptly when he said, "An Information Society in Cuba is defined as the process of ordered and massive utilization of the new computer science and communication technologies to satisfy the need of society for information and knowledge." It puts knowledge and the use of these technologies at the disposal of society and the advancement of the country. Additionally, efforts are made to

ensure that scarce computer access is equally distributed. For Cubans, computers serve a social function.

Several participants wondered why there is a lack of widespread access to the Internet and computers, which are widely available in cyber cafes in developed countries and growing in availability in many third world countries. The reasons point once again towards the blockade, which is also the Cuban word of choice, since they are the ones at the damaging receiving end. Computers are difficult to obtain, as mentioned earlier, as well as the U.S. government prohibiting countries from selling goods or ships from even docking at Cuban ports and any equipment that is available costs at least 30% more.

In addition, the type of speedy and simultaneous connections that many worldwide cyber cafes depend upon, simply don't exist in Cuba. Many of the telephone lines are old and connect under the Straits of Florida. Despite not having ideal connections, a technological infrastructure does exist in all the municipalities allowing access to the Internet both with telephone access as well as dedicated lines and a fiber optic infrastructure connects all the computer clubs.

There are 14 provinces and 169 municipalities in the country connected by fiber optic connections. The Computer Youth Clubs are found in each of the municipalities and population settlements providing free access via Pentium 4 computers connected to the Internet. It's estimated that 31 percent of the Cuban population has access to computers (2.5 million students, more than 200,000 people studying at the computer clubs and 800,000 workers.) This is an equivalent of more then 3.5 million people who personally use the computer, almost 1/3 of the entire population. Of these it is estimated that 27% have access to the Internet. Additionally, some post offices also offer Internet access.

Internet use is accomplished in a creative, rational, and ordered way according to the island's limited financial, material, and technological resources. These limitations require the policy to be working towards both an intensive as well as social use of these technological resources in an attempt to extend their benefit to the largest possible part of the populace and institutions. Cuba has recognized that this is an indispensable tool for development.

More and more computer networks are part of institutions of higher education, both in classrooms as well as for individual studies. This use of computers in education and the employment of audiovisual media are used extensively for all the children from preschoolers to young adults in both the country and cities. The few schools off the electric grid, even those with only one student, have computers running off solar energy.

There were many other issues around computers and information science that were also raised and answered. Among them was the growing use of open-source software with González Planas indicating that is the direction the country is going toward. The digital divide in rich and poor countries around the world, which was the topic at the second phase of the United Nations World Summit on the Information Society held in Tunis

November 16-19, 2005, was also discussed as well as the recent topic of who will govern the Internet itself.

There were many student participants studying computer science and information technologies at an institution dedicated to information technology, the University of Computer Sciences. This university arose out of the development of the Battle of Ideas, which in itself came about due to the case of Elian Gonzalez. This university stands out in its acknowledgement of the large scale needed as well as the application of innovative methods. The current class has 8,000 students and next year there will be 10,000, all studying to become experts in the multitude of areas offered computer scientists and engineers.

Another student emphasized an education where a strong focus is placed on preparation and instruction of the entire populace, "in general the formation and training of human resources." In addition to studying in their field, all students receive a strong education in the humanities helping to develop well-rounded people with humanist qualities. All of this is recognized as possible, thanks to the political will of the government and the effort of the people.

It was also noted that several universities throughout the country develop software. Currently there are 26 specialized computer science polytechnic institutes located in every province with more than 40,000 students who will participate in the efforts of the newly developed Cuban software industry. Additionally, graduates work teaching classes in a variety of operating systems including Linux, programming, web design, and more at the 600 computer clubs.

The use of the Internet allows Cubans to broadcast their insights and knowledge about their country. Websites of the press, radio and many diverse organizations are well-visited as well as those about culture and science. There are 136 sites for the media that include the press, radio, and television (http://www.cip.cu/), and more then 500 about culture.

It was emphasized, contrary to many people's belief, that there is free access to the Internet except for web pages of terrorist, subversive, and xenophobic organizations that assault their sovereignty and security, as well as pornography.

Computer crime was another topic briefly mentioned. The Minister indicated that the parliament is looking to modify the penal code to protect users from this form of crime that includes hackers, spam, and pornography of all kinds.

Cellular telephone service was another topic briefly mentioned. They are trying to utilize it for isolated populations in non-urban areas. González Planas indicated that today more than 100,000 individuals have this service and they are hoping to provide it to more than 300,000 by the end of 2006. Again, the greatest impediment to providing greater service is the blockade.

The blockade also affects telephone service from the United States, excessively charging those who want to call Cuba. Recent technology affecting telephone calls is called Voice over Internet Protocol, (VOIP). Telephone calling cards use this technology and its use has considerably reduced the cost for international calls. However, telephone calls from the United States to Cuba are still much more expensive than to most other countries. A four-hour call to Caracas, Venezuela from Los Angeles, California can be made for only $5.00. Five dollar telephone cards to call Cuba can be found on the Internet beginning at $.43 per minute and quickly go up to well beyond $1.20 per minute. Phone cards to Cuba and their vendors in the greater Los Angeles area, as international as it is, are difficult to come by compared to the ease of buying inexpensive phone cards to call almost anywhere else in the world.

The case of the Cuban Five was raised along with the idea of using the Internet to educate for their freedom. A group in Russia intends to do just that. A site already exists in the United States, an example of using the Internet as an educational tool about the case, (http://www.freethefive.org/).

Another bellicose activity of the United States government was explored in discussions about the illegal transmissions of both Radio and TV Marti. Currently, an airplane costing approximately an annual amount of $59 million broadcasts 2200 hours of signals weekly. This is in violation of Cuban airspace. It was also noted that this practice of the U.S. government transmitting signals began within a few years after the Cuban Revolution in January 1959.

The idea of international solidarity came up among several university students. Solidarity is seen as the idea of sharing what they have, not sharing the leftovers, the scraps. The country has accepted the responsibility to share their technological achievements with other poor countries, much as they generously do with their doctors around the world. "We are a poor, blockaded country, but we fervently wish to have a better world."

Participants left with a better understanding of how Cuba governs itself, using a social and political model with the essential premise of universal and free access to basic social services, prioritizing universal health care and education. Computer technologies are seen as part of that basic social service

The conclusions drawn from this online forum were more than the knowledge of how well-developed Cuba is in the broad realm of computer sciences, despite the blockade, but also a sense of the respect and value that Cuba places on all human and social resources and the recognition of its social responsibility and willingness to spend its scarce economic resources on its people. How egalitarian that is! What stands out even more, is that this has been done despite an economic blockade which has lasted for more then 45 years, at a cost to Cuba of more then $82 billion dollars since 1959. What kind of social services, what quantity of computers and quality connections could that have bought?

For a large annotated list of Cuban solidarity links primarily in English as well as a large collection of Cuban websites please visit: http://cubasolidarity.com/resources/links.htm Additions and corrections welcome:
dana_lubow@yahoo.com

Shaping Our Future: Library Services for Youth: The interests and preferences of children, teens, and young adults who visit the public libraries in the city of Havana

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Introduction

Studies of the public's reading tastes and preferences are a form of research that has been conducted throughout the world, especially during the last forty years of the past century and into the third millennium, by the institutions and entities whose work is aimed at a particular group or segment of the population.

In Cuba the public libraries throughout the country, as well as other cultural institutions, have carried out this type of study in order to understand their user's preferences and to be able to design or redesign the services including the cultural programming they offer their communities and to establish work strategies that correspond to the preferences of their users and the role and mission of each library.

In the past the R.M. Villena Provincial Library and some of the other libraries of the capital's library system have carried out isolated taste and preference studies that take into account the needs of individual libraries only. Other research, for example an earlier study directed at determining the "connection between the bibliographic collection and the reader's demands", was carried out biennially through the middle 90s. This research was conducted in all libraries throughout the country as part of the broader study entitled "Dynamics of the reader". This research has allowed us to know, in some measure at least, the preferences and interests of users by specific topics and titles. This project, as well as a taste and preference study done at the Villena Library a few years ago and a more recent study conducted at the "María Villar Buceta" municipal library in Central Havana completed in 1999, has been important for the libraries of the capitol.

One study that involved all of the capital's public library system was only recently completed. To further fill this gap in our knowledge, the need to understand the tastes and preferences of the system's users was added to allow us to design new work strategies, and, at the same time, contribute current information to the city's cultural program in order to design an integral cultural strategy of the capital.

Research Problem:
What are the tastes and preferences of today's readers and what are their preferences among the activities we carry out aimed at enhancing the culture of the readers who visit the libraries of the capital's public library system?

Hypothesis:
The tastes and preferences of the children and adolescent users who visit the system's libraries tend toward the topics of literature, history, and science fiction as well as such activities as book presentations and watching educational videos.

The tastes and preferences of young adult users who visit the system's libraries are associated with the topics of literature and history and such activities as book presentations, book sales and music and poetry clubs.

Objectives:

1. To understand the tastes and preferences of the users visiting the system's libraries, with respect to reading.
2. To understand the tastes and preferences of users visiting the system's libraries with respect to the activities of cultural enhancement.

Bibliographic resources consulted:
The principal bibliographic sources consulted related to social research and communication. For example:

Berger, Horst. Problemas de las investigaciones sociales.
Dewey, Melvil. Sistema de clasificación decimal.
Estudios de dinámica de la lectura realizados en la Bib. R.M.Villena, 1992-94
González Castro, Vicente. Ese misterio llamado público.
Goodo, William. Métodos de investigación social.
Pardinas, Felipe. Metodología y técnicas de investigación en Ciencias Sociales.
Viciedo Valdés, Miguel. Informe de la investigación Correspondencia entre el fondo bibliográfico y la demanda de los lectores. Bib. R. M. Villena 1995-1996.

Techniques and procedures employed:
Development of the questionnaire
Conducting surveys
Carrying out standardized interviews
Collection and compilation of data
Tabulation of data

Analysis of data

Development
The provincial library recently completed a taste and preference study of users of the capital's public library system. The development and the fulfilment of the research's objectives and the results obtained corroborate and enrich our original hypothesis.

In order to achieve this study, a group of specialists from the provincial library developed a questionnaire composed of seven questions (see appendix) as a means of measurement, to be applied as a survey of a sample of 30% of the average number of children, teens, young adults, and adult users who visited the libraries over a period of six months.

Eleven of the fourteen municipal libraries that make up the system participated in the study. These libraries applied the questionnaire and used standard interview techniques with a total of population of 3618 patrons who visited their institutions during the survey period. This was accomplished in accordance with the resource availability, e.g. paper, pens or pencils, staff etc. The following results are organized by age group:

Children and teens
 A total of 1630 users were surveyed of whom 35% (578) were between 6-11 years old and 64.5% (1052) between 12 and 16 years old. Of that total, 60.4% (685) were female and 47.5% (645) were male.

Of the total surveyed (1622), 99.5% were students. The educational level of these respondents was divided into the following categories: Elementary 43.19% (704), secondary 54.7% (892), technical schools 20.2% (33) and advanced polytechnic institutions 0.06% (1).

Of the respondents, 58.1% indicated that they liked to read, 21.1% at times, and 17.6% responded negatively. Of the total of those polled, ten did not respond to the question.

Of the group who liked to read, 49.6% preferred to read at home, 40.9% preferred to read at the library and only 8.7% preferred to read in another location. The users who read at the library state that there they are able to read books and other materials that are not available at bookstores, that the library has a pleasant atmosphere or because their home environment is not conducive to reading. Those that read at home like the intimacy of an environment where they can spread out, read can read in bed and enjoy comforts not found in the library. They also like not being pressured with closing times.

At 54.8%, the reader's preferred genre is novels, followed in second place by the short story with 53.3 and in third place by poetry with 37.1%. The preferred topics by those polled are: in first place is literature, 50%, followed by science fiction 26.4%, history, 24.1% and sports and recreation 15.09%

Of the cultural activities chosen by children and teen users, respondents stressed in order of preference the following:

1- Educational and entertainment videos, 29.7
2- Game workshops, 26.1%
3- Book talks and sale of books, 23.1%
4- Talks on subjects of interest for children and adolescents, 21.1%
5- Art workshops, 20%

Among the tiles of greatest preference mentioned by those polled, they stressed
Harry Potter
Lord of the Rings
Alice in Wonderland
La princesa nomo
Viaje al espacio
The jackal
Great biographies
Coloring books
Journey to the center of the earth
Textbooks (geography, physics, music, botany, chemistry)
Greek Mythology
History of dance

Those surveyed did not state a preference for particular authors.

Young adults and adults
A total of 1988 young adults and adults were surveyed. Of these, 34.7% (691) were between 17 and 24 years old, 27.9% (556) between 25 and 40 years, 20.3% (404) were 55 years of age or older, and 16.9% (337) between 41 to 54 years old. Of that total, 57.1% (1137) were female and 42.8 (851) male.

Of the total surveyed (1622), 99.5% were students. The educational level of these respondents was divided into the following categories: Elementary 43.19% (704), secondary 54.7% (892), technical schools 20.2% (33) and advanced polytechnic institutions 0.06% (1).

Workers amounted to 37.7% (751), 307% (611) students, 17.7% (353) retired, 9.8% (196) were housewives and 2.4% (49) weren't working.

Those who like reading were 78.9% (1569), 14.8% (295) occasionally and 5.8% didn't like reading. Of the total of those polled, eight didn't respond to the question.

A large group of the readers preferred to read at home, 59.7% (1187), 30.9% (616) preferred the library and 5.2% (105) preferred to do it in another place Those who preferred to read at home claim it is more comfortable, there is no pressure about closing time and that they have the book with them. Those who opt for the library, state that it is quieter; many of the books cannot be found in the bookstores; and the library

environment is pleasant. Those who prefer to read in another place like parks, areas with vegetation and fresh air, and beaches because they see reading as a leisure activity.

The genres preferred by the users are, in the first place, novels at 63%, in second place, the short story at 42.25%, followed by poetry 25%, satire and humor 23.2%, and first-person accounts 15.7%

Topics preferred by those surveyed are, in descending order, literature 52.1%, history 32.3%, science fiction 19.7%, biography 17.5% and social sciences 15.2%.

Of the cultural activities preferred by both young adults and adults at the library, they emphasized:

1- Presentation and book sale 37.1%
2- Book fairs 18.2%
3- Music and book clubs 15.3%
4- Advanced cultural classes
5- Talks and conferences 14.6%

Among the titles of greatest preference they emphasized the following:

El Monte by Lydia Cabrera
Máscaras (Masks)
Jardín (Garden)
Paisaje de otoño (Autumn passage)
Veinte poemas de amor y una canción desesperada (Twenty poems of love and a song of despair)
La casa de los espíritus (House of the spirits)
Paula
Poesías de José A. Buesa (Poems of Jose A. Buesa)
Tipos y costumbres (Social life and customs)
Biographies of famous authors
Biography of Napoleon Bonaparte
Buenos días tristeza (Good morning sadness)
Great biographies
Gigi
Literature about yoga
Diario de Ana Frank (Diary of Anne Frank)
History of art
Text books about social and pure sciences

And they emphasized the authors that they prefer:

Lydia Cabrera
Leonardo Padura
Isabel Allende

Dulce María Loynaz
José Ángel Buesa
Mario Benedetti
José María Vargas Vila
Gabriel García Marques
Pablo Neruda
Amado Nervo
Jorge Luis Borges
José Cantón Navarro
Albert Camus
José Mancisidor
Víctor P. Landaluze.

Conclusions
The results of the study confirm the original hypothesis. The proposed objectives have been achieved. The analysis of the data allows us to advance the following conclusions:

The majority of library users surveyed are female.

The ages most represented in the study are adolescents between 12 and 16, young adults between 17 and 24, adults from 25 to 40, and senior citizens 55 and older.

The school level that predominates in children and teens is junior high, and in the young adults and adults those from pre-university and technical school.

In the population's economically active sector the most represented are workers and in those economically non-active are students and housewives.

In the majority, users who visit the libraries, children and adolescents as well as young adults and adults, in the majority like to read, whether at home or in the library, with books and documents which are available to them in our libraries. This confirms the need for libraries as public spaces that enhance the culture and education of the population both within and outside of the institutions.

The novel, the short story, and poetry are the three genres preferred by the readers of all age groups surveyed. The topics preferred are literature, history, and science fiction.

The activities preferred by our children and teen users at the library are educational theatrical videos, game workshops, and book talks and sales.

The activities preferred by the young adults and adults at the libraries are: book talks, book sales, book fairs, and music and poetry clubs.

Authors preferred by young adult and adult users surveyed are: Lydia Cabrera, Leonardo Padura, Dulce María Loynaz, Isabel Allende, José Ángel Buesa, Mario Benedetti Y Gabriel García Márquez.

The preferred titles of the children and teens are Harry Potter, Lord of the Rings, Alice in Wonderland, Journey to the Center of the Earth, and The Gnome Princess, among others.

The titles most preferred by young adult and adults are: El Monte by Lydia Cabrera, Máscaras (Masks by Ramo Perez de Ayala), Jardín (Garden), Paisaje de otoño (Autumn Landscape, by Leonardo Padura Fuentes), Twenty poems of love and a song of despair (Pablo Neruda), House of the Spirits (Isabel Allende), Paula, and Poetry of José A. Buesa.

Recommendations
Utilize the results of the study of the tastes and preferences in the design of strategies and work projections of the libraries of the Capital, as well as in the selection and acquisition of books corresponding with the interests and preferences of children, teens, and young adults who visit the public libraries of the city of Havana.

Design a program of activities for our public libraries that promotes reading and the cultural level of the population and corresponds to the interests and preferences of the users.

Present the results of this study to the administrative authorities and cultural and government employees in the capital, as well as to others involved in the development of the capital's culture, in order to demonstrate to them how the interests of this segment of the population are driven, and to allow them to establish strategies that contribute to the fulfilment of the long and short range plans of these interests.

Achieve this research by conducting a taste and preference study every two years in the libraries of the public library system of the city of Havana, to be able to determine how user interests are changing and to enrich in a systematic and dynamic way the work strategies established in conformance with new options and criteria. This continuity of study will ensure that the librarian's work with children, teens, and young adults remains fresh and vital.

Utilize the results of this study in the design of the Cultural Program of the City of Havana.

The Culture of Comfort

Annette de Faveri

Libraries are meant to provide equal access to information for all community members. How then does the library build its capacity to serve the increasing numbers of socially excluded people who do not use its resources but who would benefit significantly from them? We need to identify the barriers that keep people from walking through our doors. We need to identify ourselves as one of the barriers.

Librarians are a barrier because we are mired in a culture of comfort. Like most people we remain where we are comfortable: comfortable with the programs we offer, comfortable with the services we provide, and comfortable with the people we serve. Even our challenges are comfortable: to do more of what we always do for the people we always serve. As a result we often fail to serve communities that do not look, feel, or think like us. Even when we acknowledge our responsibilities to communities that are not reflections of ourselves, our institutional culture lets us impose our concepts of appropriate services on people who were never interested in them in the first place. Thus our culture of comfort becomes a culture of colonialism. And like colonialism it assumes that the colonizers understand the needs of the colonized better than they do themselves.

The library's culture of comfort lets us define our communities as the people who use our services, and who know and like us. Our responsibility to the community is discharged when we meet the needs of these patrons. We then evaluate and measure our success by surveying individuals who use the library. By definition these are people who find the library supportive of the issues that matter to them and who see the library reflecting the values and social structures that they are comfortable with. This self-reinforcing loop lets us mask exclusionary library practices by claiming that we respond to community feedback, and that we serve all the people who want to be served.

Our culture of comfort lets us believe that if people do not use the library it is because they do not know about the library. It lets us believe that a marketing campaign, or a warm and personal introduction, is all that is necessary to inaugurate people into the library. But socially excluded people know about the library. And what they know is that the library makes them feel uncomfortable and unwelcome. We are so caught up in doing what we always do, in justifying what we always do, and then assuring ourselves that we are doing the right thing, that we sometimes lose sight of our most basic mandate, to provide information to all. To provide information to all we need to understand why some people are uncomfortable and unwelcome in the library. As unsettling as it may be we need to evaluate our own responses to socially excluded people.

For example, recently a teenaged boy asked a librarian where he could go because his parents had kicked him out of the house. The librarian thought this was an inappropriate question because she was not a social worker. But as a librarian she could have answered the question as easily as answering a request for an address. The question was difficult

because the boy was not a typical patron and did not embody the social values the library tacitly endorses. The boy makes us uncomfortable because he forces us to acknowledge that there are questions we need to answer from people who are often afraid to talk to us. And they are afraid for legitimate reasons. They are afraid of the library's bureaucratic and middle class environment that judges them by the questions they ask.

Many librarians are appalled when they hear this story and express sympathy and concern for the boy. But the issue is not what we feel or do individually. The issue is what we do collectively as an institution. Individually we can serve the boy as best we can in the moment, but collectively we need to acknowledge that he represents a much larger group that is not using the library. Collectively we can use our sympathy and concern to fuel inclusive policies, programs, and services that recognize the needs of people who are alienated from the library. We need to change our culture and ourselves if we intend to regularly and thoughtfully connect excluded people with the library.

Change is difficult. Recently a group of librarians met to discuss the needs of socially excluded groups and individuals. The discussion began with the ranking librarian expounding the excellence of existing services and explaining that many of the "new" ideas for discussion had been thought of and tried before, and had failed. She went on to talk about ways to convince non-users of the importance of ongoing library programs and services. What was not discussed were ways to engage excluded communities in conversations about what they wanted from the library. Nor was there a discussion about how difficult this would be, or how hard it would be to listen to community suggestions without overlaying our own biases and prejudices. The discussion was about changing socially excluded people's view of the library instead of changing the library's view of socially excluded people.

Librarians design programs and services to promote resources and to meet community needs. But without community consultation the programs and services we create only reflect our interpretations of what people want. For example, we believe that our job search and basic computer courses can help people such as Tom, a recent parolee, to find employment and re-integrate into society. When Tom was finally asked what he wanted from the library he replied "cookbooks." At age 62 Tom made his first trip to the library because he wanted to make himself a curry dinner. When we consult people about their wants and needs, and when we respond to their requests, we build an inclusive library that listens to even the faintest voices. If we begin by listening rather than rushing to teach and instruct, we can change our view of socially excluded people. Only then will socially excluded people feel supported and welcome in the library.

Librarians can list excluded groups in our communities – the poor, the physically and mentally ill, the under-educated, the uneducated, the addicted, the abused, and the alone – but reiterating the list should not be confused with addressing the needs of these communities or building a more socially inclusive library. Before we can address the needs and wants of excluded communities we must acknowledge the systemic barriers that keep them from using the library. Then we need to accept that the first changes we make must be to our culture. Finally we can experiment with new approaches and build

new relationships with the people who know that the library does not currently represent them.

We need to make ourselves and our institutions inclusive and accessible. We need to create policies, programs and services that are committed to equitable communities. To do this we must shed our culture of comfort. We need to emphasize ideas over tasks, and processes over solutions. We need to insist that experiences and effects are as significant a measure of our success as counting heads at a library program. Collectively we can debunk the myth that the current definition of the library and librarian is complete and needs only to be reproduced to be successful. This is not a "them or us," or an "old versus new" split in our profession. It is simply the recognition that if we are indeed society's most egalitarian institution we must become egalitarian.

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"IN" versus "WITH" the Community: Using a Community Development Approach to Public Library Service

By Brian Campbell

In 2004, Vancouver Public Library initiated a project to develop methods for libraries to work with low-income communities through a community development approach and to explore ways to overcome systemic barriers to library use by the socially excluded. Funded by Human Resources Development Canada, the Libraries in Marginalized Communities project included Halifax Public Libraries, Toronto Public Library and Regina Public Library. Community Development Librarians (CDLs) work in the community, and with the community, to determine how best the library could serve its needs.

After only a few months of community work, the CDLs argued the project title did not fit neither the project's goals nor the reality of their work. The title was changed to Working Together: Libraries – Community Connections. In that title change lies the essential difference between the outreach work normally associated with libraries and the concept of community development.

As librarians, we believe we are fulfilling our mission to provide equal access to all. Library staff often point to specific programs like literacy programs, computer training, ESL and outreach to daycare centres as examples of making the library accessible to everyone. Many of these programs are outside the library's regular operating budget, and neither the programs nor the attitude of working with the community are mainstream in the library organization.

The reality, however, is that libraries do not do a good job of providing library service to the very poor and socially excluded. There are many reasons for this. Libraries are organized and structured by mainly middle-class professionals who have absorbed their profession's and their class' norms. Most librarians work in libraries where the rules of behaviour have been established to ensure an organized, functional and controlled environment. Users approach staff behind reference or circulation desks where the rules ensure us a familiar role. Most of our current users understand and are comfortable with these rules. It is difficult for most of us to understand that not everyone feels the same comfort.

Indeed, the first shock for the CDLs was to discover many in the community are angry with the library or unwilling to go back to the library because of their experiences. Many simply do not think of the library as a resource for them. Many individuals felt the library didn't want "their kind": indeed, the frequent discussions in libraries about smelly users, inappropriately dressed patrons, patrons nodding off in the library and socially awkward users flag this as an area of discomfort both for staff and the usual library patrons.

Fines and charges for lost/damaged material are major blocks for low-income users: because of them, children are often discouraged from using the library. In one example in

Vancouver, a man was still carrying a library card he had not used for 10 years because of outstanding fines.

When the question of service to the socially excluded is raised, this community is misunderstood or viewed as equivalent to other populations the library might not serve adequately. Arguments have been made to me that while it is true libraries are not serving the socially excluded, they are also not doing a good job of servicing the wealthy, businesses or the technologically savvy either. These three and other groups are viewed as service gaps equivalent to the socially excluded: a view I find flawed. Those who are socially excluded have nowhere else to go. The library could be an extremely important resource in their life. Indeed, the stories librarians are most proud of are those where the librarian or library has played a key role in the life of an immigrant, a homeless person or someone who is distraught (See Beyond Words). These stories demonstrate our desire to work with those who are socially excluded as a core part of library service. Library branches like Carnegie in Vancouver, Albert in Regina and others are ongoing attempts to provide these services.

One lesson of Working Together is that we do not see the library in the same way as many socially excluded see it.

What is the difference between the two project titles? It is the difference between working in the community and working with the community.

Working in the Community

Libraries often work in the community. Taking outreach programs offered in the building into the community to a designated external location or group of individuals has been part of the library repertoire for many decades. Homebound drop-offs to the visually impaired, seniors centre visits and children's story times in daycares and school classes are well-established outreach services.

Community outreach is an association between the library and selected institutions or individuals that results in the provision of a specific service. The arrangement is primarily between institutions, and reflects users' needs and requirements as mediated through the institutions. The service is typically scheduled in advance, at a regular location for a particular group. Most often, the program is very similar to those offered in the library and probably does not involve those receiving the service involved in designing or planning it.

Outreach typically responds to only one facet of an individual's life. For example, libraries provide books to the visually impaired but are rarely engaged in the other library-related issues faced by those patrons. Nor is the project typically engaged with the individual's place in the community.

While there may be some feedback mechanism, it is generally the library that determines the service, how it is provided and whether or not it is a success, often on the same basis – including the need for efficiency and statistical outcomes (attendance) – as regular library programs. Outreach projects are valuable tools for libraries and extend their reach

into the community, but they are not the same as programs and services that grow out of the community.

Working with the Community
The community development approach begins from the position of the individual and from the perspective of the community. It assists individuals or communities to articulate their needs and then investigates ways and means to work collaboratively to respond to those needs.

Outreach begins by providing programs, while community development begins by building relationships. Building relationships can be simple or complex. They can be between two individuals or between an individual and an institution, or between two institutions. Building relationships is particularly important when focusing on socially excluded groups who need to develop a foundation of trust and respect before they willingly and frankly discuss their needs. It is necessary to earn their trust.

The community development approach recognizes and acknowledges the conditions that define the lives of socially excluded groups and individuals. They may be unemployed or have low incomes. They experience addictions, poor literacy skills, mental illnesses or limited education and training. They are unlikely to have the bureaucratic or organizational skills that allow them to maneuver within the institutions that dominate their lives and control their choices. Generally speaking in our society, the socially excluded are exploited in the labour market and frustrated by the social safety net agencies which are forced to restrict the resources available to them. In many cases they are looked upon as obstacles who frustrate the ability of staff to meet their quotas for production statistics or budget control. At every point, the "system" is alien to the socially excluded. Even an institution as benign as the library is a minefield of protocol, established norms, and financial penalties.

There is an additional reason for spending time to establish trusting relationships. Socially excluded individuals are more than the characteristics used to define them. They have strengths and weaknesses, personal histories, relationships, and stories that transcend the labels put on them by various agencies. Getting to know their full story allows community development workers to understand them in real terms and to understand the community in its full complexity. A relationship of trust is a basic foundation on which we can begin to work with communities.

Once relationships have been established, the process of working with individuals to discuss and articulate their needs, and to establish a path to meeting those needs, can begin. This means responding to more than one facet of the individual with one program. It means working with the whole individual in the context of the whole community. While this might seem like a linear, incremental process, it is in reality a very complex process with moments of revelation and intimacy, and moments of frustration and distance.

Establishing relationships with a number of community individuals and groups provides both a grounded understanding of the community and an entry into it. Relationships nurture the resources that are necessary to respond to the community's needs. Community relationships make it possible to propose concepts and programs representing a continuum of responses over a long period of time rather than a series of fragmented resource bursts.

Outreach supports detachment, but community development requires risk. Community development looks into the library rather than the other way around. It changes community perceptions of librarians and libraries and deals with communities and individuals not as fragments or episodes but as a totality. It requires engagement and personal vulnerability rather than static or official plans. Outreach is an extension of our present business model. Community development is a rich and complex approach that evolves innovative models of librarianship and sustainable communities.

An important lesson learned in the Working Together projects is the amount of time it takes to establish relationships, gain trust and develop services with the socially excluded that respond to their needs. While most library services are justified quantitatively, working with the community is measured in changing lives and gathering stories.

This approach is not simple and the extent to which it can be used in libraries is still open to discussion and evaluation. Even while the CDLs are working full-time in the community, it is still very difficult to break away from the approaches of a librarian based inside a library. Running to programs rather than establishing relationships is still a problem.

However, we are discovering a level of complexity and richness in working with the community that can only benefit both libraries and their communities. From learning how to develop and present computer training programs outside of the classroom setting to finding the value of community asset maps for ongoing branch library work, the lessons of this project will inform a new way of thinking about community libraries.

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Mind the Gap

John Pateman

"There is something peculiar about the British attitude to class, some contradiction or unease. On the one hand, we say that class is a thing of the past or rapidly becoming so…Anyone can now pass so freely from one part of society to another that the barriers, such as they are, are no longer to be taken seriously. On the other hand, we continue to 'mind the gap'…" (Mount, 2004)

In my previous article [*Culture, Identity and Libraries*, ISC 21] I looked at how working class people do not use public libraries in the same proportion as their numbers in society, and what can be done to address this situation. In this concluding article I consider how working class people can be given some power and control over public libraries and how this can lead to the development of needs based library services.

In his book *Mind the Gap – the new class divide in Britain* Ferdinand Mount argues that there is a new class divide in Britain which is just as vicious and hard to get rid of as the old one. Through acute observation and vivid illustration – drawing on every aspect of life from soap operas, speech patterns and gardening to education and the distribution of wealth – he demolishes the illusion that we live in a classless society and shows how the worst off in Britain today are more culturally deprived than their parents or grandparents.

As Mount points out, and as I have found out over the years every time I have raised class as an issue within the library profession, "To reopen the whole question of class in Britain is to blunder into a mine field. Most of us find the subject painful and embarrassing. The words we have to choose from can sound patronising, crass or unkind – lower class, lower middle class, working class, let alone bourgeois or petit bourgeois. Even middle class is these days often used as a venomous synonym for smug, unadventurous or selfish."

Mount has invented his own words for the classes – the Uppers and the Downers. He examines the experiences of these groups in terms of economic equality, lifestyle and equality of opportunity. In each case he argues compellingly, and with plenty of evidence, that none of these "versions of classlessness" actually exist. Instead we have a situation in which "the old class system has been reconstituted into a more or less meritocratic upper tier and a lower tier which is defined principally by its failure to qualify for the upper tier. This is the new gap that we have to mind."

Mount examines the ignorance and fear expressed by the Uppers towards the Downers through their portrayal in literature (*The Time Machine*, *Brave New World*) and the media (soaps and reality TV). This has helped to widen the gap between the classes who now effectively exist in completely separate worlds: "It is indeed possible for a middle class person to traverse the entire length of a blameless life without seriously engaging with a current member of the lower classes (although he or she may well meet plenty of upward

achievers from modest origins). In some senses, the bottom class in England is more socially isolated than ever before in history. The exceptional visitations from the middle classes in a therapeutic role – as doctor or social worker or divorce lawyer – only serve to emphasise that isolation."

In addition to this isolation, Mount argues that the Downers have been deprived of many aspects of their life which at one time earned them the respect of the Uppers. "For the ultimate deprivation that the English working class has suffered – in fact the consequence of all the other deprivations – is the deprivation of respect." He traces this back to "the invention of the Masses". This process began with the Industrial Revolution for this unprecedented massing of people led, naturally, almost unthinkingly, to the concept of 'the masses'.

In former times there had been fine gradations between and within each class. After the Industrial Revolution there were just two classes: the "Bourgeoisie and Proletariat" (*Communist Manifesto*), "the rich and the poor" (*Sybil*). The masses were invented and society was divided into two great opposing forces. But the impact of the two classes model was never simply economic. From the outset it had a devastating effect, not so much upon the mindset of those who were grouped together in 'the working class' as upon the attitudes and assumptions of those who weren't. It was in the mind of the upper and middle classes that the idea of the masses really took hold – and with effects that were to prove baleful.

The assumption was that industrialisation had somehow dehumanised the working class. To rescue them the state had to step in because the poor were incapable of fending for themselves, educationally and morally as well as economically. There must therefore be a national system of education, a state system of welfare, public libraries and all the other institutions of Victorian paternalism. The working class were regarded by the Uppers as helpless and inherently stupid and this was reflected in the novels of Shaw, Wells and Gissing: "Virtually all the great modernist writers of the first half of the 20th century followed Gissing in his fear and loathing of the masses: E.M. Forster, Virginia Woolf, D.H Lawrence, and, not least, T.S. Eliot".

The lower middle classes and suburbia were a particular target of the intelligentsia. "So for those born somewhere near the bottom, the going is tough. In fact the problem is more or less insoluble. If they are loud and drunk and fornicate like rabbits, they are little better than animals. But if they are quiet and respectable and well behaved they are worse still. Either way, the intellectuals will continue to loathe and despise them".

The working classes were considered to be immoral, godless, ignorant, feckless, infantile. And hence unable to sustain family life, utterly heathen, incapable of absorbing education, enable to look after themselves economically, and unfit to take part in politics and government. Mount looks at each of these myths in turn and comprehensively demolishes every one of them.

With regard to education, for example, he demonstrates that the Downers were capable of organising their own schooling and many of them could read and write. The Poor Law Commission in 1841 found that 87 per cent of workhouse children in Norfolk and Suffolk between the ages of nine and sixteen could read and more than half of them could write. The Committee of the Council on Education in the same year was told that 79 per cent of miners in Northumberland and Durham could read   and more than half of them could write. Of the population of Hull in 1839, 14,109 out of 14,526 adults had attended   day or evening school and over 92 per cent of them could read. Most of these adults must have left school before the first modest State subsidies to education began in 1833 and well before the Education Act of 1870.

The working classes organised and paid for their own education which was supplemented by Sunday schools for the children and Mechanics Institutes for their parents: "What was absorbed in the Mechanic's Institute was very far from mechanical. Behind those dignified buildings which went up all over the Welsh valleys, in the mill towns of Yorkshire and Lancashire and behind the shipyards of the Tyne, the Clyde and the Mersey lay a cultural upsurge of the most uninhibited, energetic, idealistic kind. But it was only an intensification, a heightened version of the general thirst for education which united the clerical lower classes and the industrial working class throughout the period."

By the time the Great Reform Bill was passed in 1832, the Mechanics Institutes, the working men's schools and the mutual improvement societies were to be found in almost every industrial district. In Carlisle, at least 24 reading rooms were founded between 1836 and 1854 with a total of almost 1,400 members and 4,000 volumes. Such reading rooms typically offered classes in reading, writing and mathematics, taught either by the members themselves or by professional teachers who volunteered their services.

The working classes provided for their own social welfare through friendly societies and they demonstrated their ability to organise and govern themselves via the trade union and Labour movement. But much of this "civilisation of the working classes" is now largely hidden from view, buried under the ideology of social progress   which is our orthodoxy and which has been drummed unto us by school teachers, historians and self congratulatory politicians ever since.

Mount explains how and why so much of that "civilisation" came to be lost. The institutions of the Downers – the schools, the chapels, the Mechanics Institutes, the friendly societies – were systematically destroyed. This is no accident. The final closure of so many working class institutions is only the culmination of a long and bitter campaign to deride and eclipse them. From the moment that those lower class institutions began to blossom, they were under unremitting   attack from the guardians of the Established culture.

"Their churches have been derided and strangled, their schools and hospitals and savings schemes have been taken over by the state, they have been herded into mass housing (largely paid for by the tax deducted from their own pay packets), and in return for modest improvements in their real take home pay they remain subject to the bleak

disciplines of capitalist enterprise. Their old loyalties to Queen and country – and indeed to county, town and trade union – have been belittled. In return, they are fed by the media with a stream of degraded pap which for the most part leaves them dissatisfied and feeling they have been gulled."

The Downers of today are much worse off than the Downers of 1970 or even the 1930's. Their cultural impoverishment blots out any modest material improvements. Whereas the working classes used to have some real control over certain aspects of their lives, they are now managed by the middle classes. There is now a huge army of officials to manage the Downers including Youth Workers, Social Workers, Probation Teams, Truancy Officers and the wide range of posts to be found in a typical edition of the Wednesday 'Society' supplement of the *Guardian.*

The common assumption today is that the bottom class need to be managed. "What I do not think many people have yet woken up to is that the working class has been subjected to a sustained programme of social contempt and institutional erosion which has persisted through many different governments and several political fashions." Instead of the undoubted affluence of the 1950s and 60s offering people in the bottom class a greater say over their lives, in some respects their lives have become more 'massified', less responsible than those of their parents and grandparents.

Mount calls his solution to this problem "unlock and allot". The idea is simply to unlock the value that is already theoretically the property of the Downers and to allot it to them specifically by name, whether as individuals, families or voluntary groups. An allotment is an entitlement rather than an allocation. This principle can be applied to the allotment of land and services, including education, health and library services. It can also be applied to the workplace and to the appointment of public officials such as chief constables.

In the case of public libraries, for example, each resident could be given an allotment of the service, perhaps in the form of a voucher which they could redeem at their local library. This would return some real power to ordinary people and give them some genuine ownership and control of the library. They could use their allotment to ensure that the library service was fully meeting their needs.

This could have a dramatic effect on public libraries and force or encourage them to take a needs based approach to service delivery. In a recent opinion poll (*Sunday Times* 25 August 2002) more than two thirds of British adults considered themselves to be working class. Putting power and control back into their hands would give working class people a majority stake and say in how public libraries are managed and delivered.

The General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) and health care: an introduction and annotated bibliography

Keith Nockels

This paper begins with a general introduction to GATS, and then continues with an annotated bibliography of articles which discuss GATS or the World Trade Organization (WTO) in relation to health or health care.

The General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS)

GATS was agreed by WTO members in 1994. In 2000, negotiations began to expand it.

GATS aims to increase trade in services. "Services" includes banking, insurance, retail and wholesale, tourism and transport, but also education, health care and water supply. It aims to increase trade in services by "liberalising" that trade, that is, removing restrictions, which include government measures. GATS measures can apply to all services, and also to specific areas chosen by governments for inclusion. GATS recognises four "modes" of trade in services, which are described below.

GATS negotiations were to be completed by the 1st January 2005.

GATS means that all service suppliers have to be treated alike. It is not possible to exclude a company from abroad from competing in a service market in a country. The number of service suppliers in a country cannot be restricted. It is also the case that once a service has been "liberalised" under GATS, that "liberalisation" cannot be reversed without incurring penalties. This may conflict with the provision of health care. If services are run for profit, then services which do not generate a profit may suffer and government may be powerless to intervene without contravening GATS.

GATS identifies four "modes" of trade in services:

Cross border supply: e-commerce, call centres servicing clients abroad, international postal services. In the context of health, this would include telediagnosis and telehealth.

Consumption abroad: studying at a foreign university and visiting another country as a tourist. In health, this mode would include seeking medical treatment abroad.

Commercial presence: foreign investment relating to service provision. In health, this would include the establishment of health facilities by overseas companies.

Presence of natural persons: employees going abroad. In health, this would include health personnel working abroad.

A service is excluded from GATS if it is provided with no competition, or if it is not provided on a commercial basis. The UK Government (http://www.dti.gov.uk/ewt/gats2000.doc, section 32, accessed 3rd January 2005) initially argued that this means that the NHS can be kept out of GATS. However, the NHS contains elements of competition and commerce: the application of commercial accounting procedures and the appearance of an internal market of sorts, for example. The Government is apparently now seeking legal guidance.

The existence in health services of these modes of trade may have a good side and a bad side.   Providing telemedicine services to a country may have the effect of draining resources from rural health care. Telemedicine will benefit the few, where rural health services may benefit the many. There is already more drug company money spent on treatments for Western ailments, rather than diseases endemic in the developing world. The latter affects more people, but there is more money in the former. Travelling to another country to seek treatment may lead to a dual market in that country, with health personnel being drawn to work in the centres that treat people from abroad, at the expense of centres which serve the local population. Private investment in health by foreign companies may require huge public investments, and raises the question of who controls that facility. Health personnel moving abroad may lead to a shortage of personnel in the "home" country. As the Independent newspaper has pointed out, the British National Health Service would not function without workers from outside the UK. Some workers are coming from countries which have a surplus of personnel, but there is concern that that we are causing problems in other countries through a "brain drain".   As Lipson argues, GATS may mean that developing countries are required to open up health care provision to competition, and GATS rules mean that competition may be from companies based abroad. This might mean that services improve, but experience shows that usually services become more inequitable and reduce access to the poor. As Labonte points out, GATS does not cause health privatisation, which was happening anyway. But it does accelerate it, and the result will be inequalities.

(This discussion draws heavily on the paper by Chanda. This, and other items referred to, is detailed in the annotated bibliography which follows).

Health care and GATS

This is a selection of articles published in the medical press about the WTO or GATS and health.   I hope this list might help readers develop their concerns about GATS and its effects on health. The articles listed all contain bibliographies, which may lead the reader to other useful material. Most of the material is freely available online.

Adlung, R. and Carzaniga, A. (2001). Health services under the General Agreement on Trade in Services. *Bulletin of the World Health Organization* 79(4): 352-64. Freely available at http://whqlibdoc.who.int/bulletin/2001/issue4/79(4)352-364.pdf, accessed 3rd January 2005.

The authors are employed by the WTO. This paper is an overview of the scope of GATS and commitments under the agreement. It discusses in detail the four modes of trade in services. The paper is designed to make people familiar with GATS, which it does well, but perhaps rather less than critically.

Baum, F. (2001) Health, equity, justice and the globalisation: some lessons from the People's Health Assembly. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* 55(9): 613-6. Available online at http://jech.bmjjournals.com/cgi/reprint/55/9/613.pdf, accessed 3rd January 2005, but a subscription may be needed.

This paper discusses the People's Health Assembly in 2000, which agreed a charter, the "People's Charter for Health". That charter is available at http://www.phmovement.org/charter/pch-english.html, and in other languages via the People's Health Movement website. The charter calls for transformation of the WTO and the global trading system, so that it does not violate the right to health. It also calls for the abolition of world debt and for the transformation of the World Bank and IMF. There is to be a second People's Health Assembly, in Ecuador, in July 2005. Details are at http://www.phmovement.org/pha2/

Chanda, R. (2002). Trade in health services. *Bulletin of the World Health Organization* 80(2): 158-63. Available freely online at http://www.who.int/bulletin/archives/en/80(2)158.pdf, accessed 3rd January 2005.

This paper examines ways in which health services can be traded and the positive and negative implications of this trade. It uses the "modes" defined in GATS.

Labonte, R. (2004). Nailing health planks into the foreign policy platform: the Canadian experience. *Medical Journal of Australia* 180(4): 159-62. Available freely online at http://www.mja.com.au/public/issues/180_04_160204/lab10750_fm.html, accessed 3rd January 2005.

Labonte starts from the assumption that health is a basic human right – a development goal as well as a development means. He argues that GATS is accelerating health care privatisation, and that privatisation will lead to inequalities. Labonte's work was contributed to a Canadian Royal Commission:

> "The message we conveyed to the Royal Commission was blunt: healthcare is not like other commercial services. It is essential to the creation and maintenance of a public good. Public healthcare systems arose in most countries because private systems proved inadequate and inequitable. Trade treaties — intended to promote private commercial interests — are no place to negotiate international rules for healthcare and other essential public goods such as education, water and sanitation. Indeed, the progressive liberalisation requirement of GATS may directly contravene the progressive realisation of the right to health under human rights covenants."

His conclusions are that there should be an exception in GATS to allow countries to withdraw their health, education, water or sanitation commitments without penalty, and that there should be a separate agreement governing international trade in these things, which also promotes equity.

Lipson, D. J. (2001). The World Trade Organization's health agenda. *British Medical Journal* 323(7322): 1139-40. Available freely online at http://bmj.bmjjournals.com/cgi/content/full/323/7322/1139, accessed 3rd January 2005.

Lipson argues that equity of health care may suffer under "liberalisation" of trade in services. At the time, there were few empirical studies of the effect of liberalisation on health. (Smith, writing three years later, makes the same point: I refer to his paper below).

Pollock, A. M. and D. Price (2003). The public health implications of world trade negotiations on the general agreement on trade in services and public services. *Lancet* 362(9389): 1072-5.   Freely available online at http://www.thelancet.com/journal/vol362/iss9389/full/llan.362.9389.editorial_and_revie w.27286.1, accessed 3rd January 2005. (there are underscores between "editorial", "and", and "review").

This paper argues that national autonomy over health care is not preserved under GATS, and therefore that international regulation is needed to protect public services. The UK is seeking clarification on the claim that public services are exempt from GATS. Discriminatory policies are, they argue, permissible under GATS to promote public health.   They argue that the WHO must take the lead, and gather data on the outcomes of privatisation of essential services, and that powers of enforcement must be considered for the WHO. They also argue that there is a need for an international body with a public health mandate, to act as a counterweight to the WTO, with its trade mandate.

Price, D., Pollock, A.M. and Shaoul, J. (1999). How the World Trade Organization is shaping domestic policies in health care. *Lancet* 354(9193): 1889-92. Freely available at http://www.thelancet.com/journal/vol354/iss9193/full/llan.354.9193.editorial_and_revie w.2639.1, accessed 3rd January 2005. (There are underscores between "editorial", "and", and "review").

The authors argue that education, health and welfare are high on the WTO agenda, and that the medico-pharmaceutical industry, insurance companies and corporations back this. Services, they argue, are now more important, with the decline in manufacturing. They discuss the idea that health care can be thought of as exempt from GATS, pointing out that if there is a mix of private and public health care provision, then there is competition and therefore health care is vulnerable to "liberalisation" under GATS. They argue that the introduction of the internal market in health care in the UK, and the use of commercial accounting procedures, conflicts with the idea of universal coverage and shared risk.

Smith, R. D. (2004). Foreign direct investment and trade in health services: a review of the literature. *Social Science and Medicine* 59(11): 2313-23. Available online, but a subscription is needed.

Smith's paper is a review of the empirical evidence on the effects of foreign direct investment in health care. He points out that there is not much empirical evidence, a point made three years earlier by Lipson. Much of what has been written is, he points out, speculation on what the effects might be. Smith argues that commercialisation is more significant than who is investing the money. He argues that national regulation is what will determine the impact of FDI, and that everyone needs an understanding of what exactly is being talked about in discussions of FDI and commercialisation.

Wesselius, E. (2002). *Behind GATS 2000: corporate power at work*. Amsterdam, Transnational Institute. Available at http://www.tni.org/reports/wto/wto4.pdf, accessed 3rd January 2005.

This is an introduction to GATS, produced by an organisation campaigning against it. The TNI website also includes other GATS related material, including reports of moves to persuade the French government to campaign against GATS.

Further information:

"Official" information on GATS is available at http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/serv_e/serv_e.htm and http://europa.eu.int/comm/trade/issues/newround/index_en.htm, WTO and European Union sites respectively.

GATSWatch (an organisation campaigning against GATS) – http://www.gatswatch.org

MEDACT is a UK based charity taking action on global health issues. Their website is at http://www.medact.org and there is information specifically on the WTO at http://www.medact.org/hpd_world_trade_organisation.php.

Also see the entry for this book in the Leicester Research Archive - https://lra.le.ac.uk/handle/2381/144

TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE and TRIPS

Ruth Rikowski

Introduction

'Traditional knowledge'; 'indigenous knowledge'; 'folkfore' – what is this all about, one might ask? My original interest in this topic sprung from my wider interest in regard to the agreements that are being developed at the World Trade Organisation (WTO) that are likely to have significant implications for libraries and information. These are the General Agreement on Trade in Services (the GATS) and Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS). The essence of both these agreements is to exacerbate trade on a global basis. The GATS is about exacerbating trade in services, whilst the TRIPS Agreement is about exacerbating trade in intellectual property rights. Thus, they are both enthusiastic about creating a global market environment.

The GATS is about the liberalisation of trade in services, and it quickly became apparent to me that, as such, it could threaten the state-funded provision of libraries. The implications of the TRIPS for the library and information profession is not, however, so immediately self-evident. The TRIPS agreement encompasses many different types of intellectual property rights (IPRs) but two of these IPRs are particularly relevant to the library and information profession – namely copyright and patents. However, to the extent that the profession has considered the issue at all, it has focused largely on copyright rather than patents. As the IFLA Committee on Copyright and Other Legal Matters (CLM) in its article *TIPS for TRIPS* says:

> *Of course, the most important type of intellectual property as far as libraries are concerned is copyright.* (CLM, 2002)

This article seeks to redress this balance, and to demonstrate that the patent section of TRIPS is also likely to have significant implications for the library and information profession. This is particularly in regard to the patenting of traditional knowledge in the developing world, and the way in which large corporations are appropriating this knowledge, often without giving due recompense to the indigenous population, thus keeping those in the developing world still further impoverished. Clearly, whilst this knowledge is being patented in this way it is not likely that it will be made freely available in a local library or resource centre either for the benefit of the local indigenous population. Thus, it will lessen the ability of librarians and information professionals in the developing world to be able to deliver a good and effective library and information service. It also goes against the professions' principles in regard to freedom of information. There are, however, also various other issues in relation to this, such as the reluctance of many indigenous populations to claim that they are the creators of traditional knowledge. Instead, many argue that it comes from God and/or Mother Nature. These topics will all be explored further in this article.

Furthermore, the patenting of traditional knowledge (TK) in the developing world cannot really be considered in separation from copyright. Therefore, this article will consider both patents and copyright in relation to TK in the developing world. It will examine the topic in general, and then consider how TRIPS impacts on the whole scene.

Definition of traditional knowledge

First of all, what exactly is meant by 'traditional knowledge'? Traditional knowledge is usually associated with knowledge that has been gathered over a long period amongst local, indigenous communities in the developing world, although it does not necessarily only apply to these communities. Weeraworawit provides a fairly general definition, whilst also emphasising that there is no internationally accepted definition, saying:

> *…TK is knowledge that has been developed based on the traditions of a certain community or nation.* (Weeraworawit, 2003, p.159)

Meanwhile, Pushpangadan describes TK in the following way, arguing that:

> *Traditional Knowledge System (TKS) is a community-based system of knowledge that has been developed, preserved and maintained over many generations by the local and indigenous communities through their continuous interactions, observations and experimentations with their surrounding environment. It is unique to a given culture or society and is developed as a result of the co-evolution and co-existence of both the indigenous cultures and their traditional practices of resource use and ecosystem management.* (Pushpangadan, 2002, p.1)

Martin Khor, the Director of the Third World Network makes the point that TK also sometimes has a place in modern societies, emphasising that:

> *Traditional knowledge is now widely recognised as having played and as still playing crucial roles in economic, social and cultural life and development, not only in traditional societies, but also in modern societies.* (Khor, 2002, p.15)

Often the traditional knowledge in the developing world has been accumulated over hundreds of years. It has existed for centuries in India, for example, and has been the mainstay of India's existence in many ways, especially in regard to food and health. According to RAFI (1997, p.4), (referenced in Khor's book *Intellectual property, biodiversity and sustainable development,* 2002, p.17), 80% of the population in the world relies on food provided through indigenous knowledge of plants, animals, insects, microbes and farming systems.

The TRIPS Agreement and Traditional Knowledge
The TRIPS Agreement does not refer to traditional knowledge directly at all. However, it is clear that the TRIPS Agreement is likely to impact on TK. Drahos and Braithwaite refer to patent law and TRIPS, for example, saying that:

> *Patent law…has become one of the main mechanisms by which public knowledge assets have been privatized. TRIPS itself is an outcome of this process of privatization of the intellectual commons.* (Drahos and Braithwaite, 2002, p.150)

Thus, the 'intellectual commons', which includes TK, is being patented and privatised, and then traded through TRIPS. The TRIPS Agreement is fundamentally about the trading of intellectual property rights. So, the aim is to encapsulate knowledge, information, ideas, creative works, brain-power, inventions etc (through intellectual labour) into intellectual property rights that can be traded in the market place. The interest in TRIPS is in regard to the trading of these IPRs, rather than with moral issues. The TRIPS Agreement, I am arguing, is about transforming intellectual property rights into international tradable commodities. Within this general scenario, traditional knowledge for the benefit of the local, indigenous population is under threat.

Traditional knowledge, patents and copyright in the developing world
Traditional knowledge and folklore cannot be covered under copyright, unless it is in a tangible form. This is the big problem. This means that local indigenous communities are very vulnerable. Many would not have the skills and capabilities to be able to write down what they know, and to transform it into a tangible form. Many people in these communities are illiterate. This makes it easy for large companies to come along and appropriate this knowledge and then patent it, and turn it into an intellectual property right. This is the problem that the developing world is up against. As Utkarsh says, with globalisation:

> *…knowledge and other public goods are rapidly being appropriated, transformed and marketed by commercial concerns, without any benefit being shared with the original producers.* (Utkarsh, 2003, p.190)

Furthermore, Pushpangadan notes that:

> *Many traditional communities…fear that they are losing control on their knowledge systems and that outsiders are appropriating their knowledge and resources without their consent and approval.* (Pushpangadan, 2002, p.2)

Denise Nicholson (2002) also emphasises how rural people are often at the mercy of large international corporations in regard to their TK, as these large corporations recognise the potential to be gained from traditional remedies, craftwork and other cultural traditions.

On the other hand, if the knowledge could be transferred into a tangible format, then it could then be protected by copyright and the creators of TK could then be recompensed. This is gradually starting to happen more. As Weeraworawit says:

> *In the world of information technology, satellite broadcasting and the internet, expressions of folklore have gained more economic value due to their very own creativity being preserved and refined by the indigenous or local communities.* (Weeraworawit, 2003, p. 162)

Furthermore, as Sahai says:

> *Copyright can be used to protect the artistic manifestations of the holders of indigenous knowledge, especially artists who belong to indigenous and native communities, against unauthorised reproduction and exploitation of those manifestations.* (Sahai, 2003, p.169)

Weeraworawit argues that more continuous and balanced consultation and negotiation in general, in regard to intellectual property rights and traditional knowledge is needed, in order to improve the IPR situation for the developing world.

Apart from the fact that the west often appropriates this knowledge, and often transforms it and captures it in patents without compensating the original creators, Western law also often treats intellectual property law as part of the public domain, and thus freely available to everyone. This is, no doubt, partly because of the culture embedded within the indigenous communities themselves, with their emphasis on sharing and the community spirit. Indeed, many people in the developing world see the indigenous, traditional knowledge as being part of Nature itself, and there are many strong affinities with religion as well. Thus, many would be against any notion of people owning any of this knowledge, or turning it into any form of intellectual property right. In July 1999, 114 indigenous peoples' organisations from various countries around the world and 68 indigenous peoples' support groups, issued a joint indigenous peoples' statement on TRIPS (Tebtebba Foundation, 1999). One of their statements said, for example, that nobody:

> *...can own what exists in nature except nature herself...Humankind is part of Mother Nature, we have created nothing and so we can in no way claim to be owners of what does not belong to us...Western legal property regimes have been imposed on us, contradicting our own cosmologies and values.*

So, people in general start to regard traditional knowledge as simply being in the public domain. But once again, this means that those in the developing world can and do suffer. Some argue that no protection should be considered for knowledge that has become part of the public domain. Nevertheless knowledge originally comes from a source, and as Aguilar (2003) says, just because it is the public domain that does not necessarily mean that the source has disappeared. So, there is surely no justification for saying that this knowledge should then be handed over, free of charge, particularly if it materialises that it is largely for the benefit of the rich, at the expense of the poor.

There has been considerable debate and thought given to the systems of protection that can be adopted to provide legal protection for the intellectual property of indigenous populations. Most of this has revolved around patents and copyright. However, as Sahai says, the problem is that there is a mismatch between the protection for finite, inanimate objects and '...flowing, mutable and variable properties of…IK' (Sahai, 2003, p.173)

Meanwhile, Aguilar argues that patents and other intellectual property rights are not really suitable for protecting traditional knowledge for both practical and cultural reasons. Aguilar says that there is a need to look for viable alternatives, otherwise those in the indigenous communities will become the 'victims of knowledge piracy' (Aguilar, 2003, p.181). He argues that a sui generis system tied to the framework that is provided by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and in Article 27.3(b) of TRIPS is needed urgently. Pushpangadan argues that developing countries should strive to develop policies and legislation that reflects the values and rights of the indigenous communities over their knowledge.

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) makes genetic resources and knowledge available. The CBD came into force in 1993, and it had three main objectives. These were, the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components and fair and equitable sharing of benefits that arise from the utilisation of genetic resources. Intellectual property rights are particularly relevant to fair and equitable benefit sharing. However, there has to be 'prior informed consent' (PIC) and mutually agreed terms of benefit sharing. But, as Utkarsh has pointed out, often corporations can easily access the material, and indeed that has happened with items such as neem, turmeric and basmati. Therefore, benefit sharing through PIC is often confined to untapped traditional knowledge or folk innovations that are confined to remote villages. The CBD has been ratified by over 180 countries and has been implemented through national legislation or biodiversity action plans. A number of mechanisms have been proposed to ensure that the acquisition of IPRs complies with the principles and objectives of the CBD. However, the CBD has not really been able to solve the problem in regard to benefit sharing of TK for the indigenous population.

Different projects have been undertaken in order to consider ways in which indigenous knowledge can be protected. Ana Salgar (2003) described a pilot project launched in Colombia by Sustainable Biotrade Programme of the Alexander von Humboldt Institute. The project aimed to devise some mechanisms for protecting knowledge, innovations and traditional practices related to the use of medicinal plants.

A substantial amount of work is being undertaken in India in order to document indigenous knowledge. Once the material is documented, it can then be protected by copyright. One example is the People's Biodiversity Registers (PBRs). To prevent biopiracy, the government of India is developing a digital database of public domain traditional knowledge related to medicinal plants. The plan is to make the database available to patent offices globally. PBRs are village-level documents of people's knowledge of biodiversity, which encompasses conservation and sustainable utilisation. PBRs are often developed by local teachers, students and NGO researchers as well as villagers, although the villagers are not usually educated. PBRs have been recognised by the Indian Biological Diversity Bill, as a means to ensure equitable access and benefit sharing

Utkarsh says that the development of the concept of the People's Biodiversity Registers provides a number of important lessons for South Asian and other countries. Traditional knowledge can be better protected from erosion and biopiracy, for example. PBRs can also help to sustain local trade. Registration can be followed up with social incentives to preserve and share knowledge, and knowledgeable individuals can be given recognition. Finally, computerised databases can assist in the decision-making process of how to allocate a fair share of financial or other benefits, and this can be generated by using information that is in the PBRs.

Conclusion – Traditional knowledge, TRIPS, libraries and information

The TRIPS agreement does not refer to traditional knowledge specifically, but clearly the TRIPS is going to impact on TK. As it stands, large corporations in the west can easily appropriate traditional knowledge in the developing world, transform it into an intellectual property right, (in particular, it is often patented), make money out of it, but not compensate the original creators of this traditional knowledge. One very good example here is how herbs and local remedies have been patented and sold as drugs by large corporations. The TRIPS agreement will make this whole process much easier, as it is designed to encourage the trading of intellectual property rights. Indeed, fundamentally TRIPS is about transforming IPRs into international tradable commodities, whilst the GATS (the General Agreement on Trade in Services) is about transforming services into international tradable commodities. Value that is created and extracted from labour (and largely from intellectual labour) then becomes embedded in these international tradable commodities. These commodities are then sold in the market-place and profits are made – but these profits are derived from value, and value can only ever be created by labour. As Marx said:

> *…human labour creates value, but is not itself value. It becomes value only in its congealed state, when embedded in the form of some object.* (Marx, 1887, p.57)

By this means, capitalism is sustained and perpetuated whilst labour is exploited, alienated and objectified.

Part of the problem in regard to traditional knowledge specifically though is that it is often not preserved in any tangible format, so those in the indigenous communities and the creators of the traditional knowledge are not protected by copyright. Neither are they able to protect their traditional knowledge by encapsulating it into any other intellectual property, such as a patent. This is the case for a number of reasons. Traditionally, this has not been the way in which these cultures and communities operate. And these cultures and practices have been taking place for hundreds of years – so it would involve a great change in their ways of thinking and operating. Secondly, many of these indigenous people are illiterate, so would not be able to transform their traditional knowledge into a tangible format and thus benefit from copyright protection. Thirdly, TK is often seen as just being part of the public domain, so it is not seen as necessary to document it in this way. Also, there is the assumption by many (including those in the west) that the knowledge is just there for everyone, that no-one owns it, and that there were no original creators. But obviously, there must have been some original creators at some point. Fourthly, encapsulating TK into intellectual property rights goes against some of the ethical and religious principles of these indigenous populations, who do not think that their traditional knowledge really belongs to them (even if they created it) but rather that it belongs to God and Mother Nature. Some argue that there need to be methods, other than copyright and patents, for protecting TK.

However, some in the developing world are starting to document their traditional knowledge. One good example here is the Peoples' Biodiversity Register, which is being developed in India. This is surely an area that librarians and information professionals should be taking a lively interest in, and contributing to. They could, for example, help to

play a role in endeavouring to overcome the illiteracy problem and assist with the documentation process in general. They could also seek to demonstrate the benefits that can accrue to the local population by having their TK in a tangible format. This knowledge can then be made available in the local library for the benefit of all the local population, as opposed to the benefits being transferred to rich corporations in the west. The profession should also be exploring other ways to help these indigenous communities to overcome these serious problems.

It is heartening to see that the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) and the United Nationals Environment Programme (UNEP) have undertaken a study on this subject, and in particular have considered how best to recompense the local indigenous populations for the traditional knowledge that they hold. There was a report on the study in the March 2004 issue of *Managing Information*. The news report highlights the fact that:

> *The study suggests that there is scope for intellectual property rights to be used more effectively to generate and share more equitably both monetary and non-monetary benefits.* (News report from WIPO, Managing Information, 2004, p.20)

The library and information profession is now, indeed, moving these issues forward. Research on the implications of TRIPS for libraries and information is currently being undertaken by Professor Myra J. Tawfik, at the University of Windsor, Canada. Professor Tawfik has been selected by the Canadian Library Association Trade Treaties Committee, and has been given funding by various library organisations. The study examines the role that TRIPS is playing in shaping domestic copyright policy, and the intention is that it will play a role in influencing the ability of libraries to provide fair and easy access to information. The study will be of interest to various international organisations that are involved with public access to information. It will provide information on the TRIPS and its implications, including the necessary information to be able to engage with trade officials. In this way, it hopes to influence the formulation of national positions on intellectual property in regard to international trade treaties.

If we want to preserve some of the basic principles embedded within our profession, then I suggest that we need to be more aware of and understand these WTO agreements, and the impact that they are likely to have on the library and information profession. Then, we will be better placed to try to do something about it all, and will enable us to go forth and try and change the scene.

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Sexy Words, Iconic Phrases and slippery terms – it's all newspaper talk: a theoretical analysis of the language used by the newspaper industry to manifest and perpetuate discourse

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ABSTRACT *This paper explores the range of discursive positions adopted by newspapers to perceive issues. Through the application of a theoretical analysis on the commentaries' language, this paper speculates on who profits from the underlying message that is deduced. This paper advocates the need to apply critical thought to apparatuses such as the media, because they seek to establish a particular public agenda. It is a chief aim of this paper to illuminate the notion that newspapers are ideological institutions engineered to serve specific ideological objectives. Exposing this knowledge is intended to propel an impetus that promotes the need to understand newspaper commentary in a wider context – which would provide a platform on which to challenge hegemonic truths implanted on society.*

Richard Johnson, Stuart Hall and Michel Foucault have provided a theoretical basis for the key argument that newspapers are an important part of the production of discourse. Mainly by the application of Antonio Gramsci's concept of hegemony, a critique of discourse production is offered. It is argued that via the occupation of power, the means to ideological apparatuses is available to only a few in the upper echelons of society. Furthermore, the rhetoric here lies in the fact that the proprietors of news-producing institutions own the means to ensure that power is locked in a reciprocal paradigm to reproduce the status quo. The objective is to highlight the notion that any sort of challenge to the inequalities presented by the organisation of society, fundamentally requires an understanding of the mechanism that perpetuates it.

The media are now responsible for providing groups and classes with images, information, knowledge concerning their own lives and the lives of other groups. They intervene in what appears to be the bewildering complexity of our modern lives, by classifying certain images, within certain preferred meanings and interpretations. This ceaseless ideological work of classifying permits consensus and consent to emerge out of apparent plurality.

(Docker, 1994, p61)

Introduction

In Britain 67% of the population read a national newspaper (Newspaper Society, 2003, p1). This makes national newspapers a significant medium of communication that has the potential to have a far-reaching influence in society.

Newspapers serve powerful political, cultural and social functions in society. McNair (1994, p14) argues that newspapers are major sites where discourse is manifested and proliferated:

> Newspapers come ahead of friends, family, politicians or
> other sources of information when it comes to influencing
> opinion.

For this reason, the position adopted by a particular newspaper becomes socially significant for its readership. According to Stevenson (1997), newspapers not only have the potential to shape public opinion by offering persuasive commentary, but also control public opinion by creating agendas. By simply reporting on an issue, newspapers make it a topical item on the public agenda. This then means that the way in which the journalist cultivates the argument, will have an affect on whether the issue is positively or negatively received.

Newspapers constitute a very powerful social institution capable of selling issues as intangible products to the readership in order to influence the public mood. Newspapers are messengers, and ultimately, the positive or negative connotation attached to the issue by the newspaper coverage may have an impact on the electoral vote.

It is significant that national newspapers in Britain are oligopolies - in the hands of the powerful few like Rupert Murdoch who himself controls more than 34% of the daily press and more than 37% of the Sunday market (Pilger, 1999, p467). This means that, as well as attempting to normalise particular discourses, there is also a narrower range of discursive positions offered in newspapers (O'Neill, 1991). For this reason, opinions are nearly monolithic from newspaper to newspaper, and they are likely to serve the interests of the media moguls who own the largest proportion of the market share. The media is an enterprise of inequality, because media corporations have the capacity to suppress contestation and alternative views by exploiting their power to galvanise specific discourses.

Newspapers are very influential because they are an apparatus that provide a 'version of social reality' for their readers (Wetherall, 2001a, p17). Public perceptions are inevitably influenced by newspaper discourses because they offer a worldview and an experience of issues that are not tangible to the reader (*ibid*). Newspapers provide a window to a virtual reality or, in other words, newspapers bridge the gap between the actual and the virtual, the things that are not lived, but have an influence on the experience of living. Via the newspapers narrative, readers can indulge in 'perceptual judgement' to create a reality of the issue (Massumi, 2003a, p144). The meta-narrative contained in the newspaper is contexualized within the reader's actual existence and, through this connection, newspapers appear to advocate logical perceptions that are compatible with the reader's conditions of existence.

Newspapers provide readers with an interface to issues and events. By illuminating the relationship between the reader and the topic's wider implications, through the newspapers lens, readers can personalise the topic. The personalisation of text allows the reader to purchase the narrative in his/her own logical world. This is about capturing the reader's sensibilities, and locating the reader's own actual reality, which forms the reader's 'sensory perception'. By grabbing the readers 'sensory perception' (Massumi, 2003b, p[n.k]) through the construction of the narrative, the reader can engage with message in the text, and relate to the issue that he/she is affected by, but cannot tangibly and directly connect to.

The virtual experience in newspaper commentary become a substitute for something that is not lived and experienced, but perceived through the virtual by way of philosophical prehension. This envisaged reality, or 'bio-aesthetic' (Mullarkey, 2003, p2), of the intangible issue in newspapers, combined with the reader's own being and ontology, paves the way for readers to create a truth that is sensible in their own reality.

The use of language is pivotal in the way newspaper commentary is constructed. Wetherall (2001a, p17) comments:

> Criticism is most effective when it looks as though it is coming from an unbiased and neutral source [that] is merely describing what is the case, or from a source [which] is otherwise positive about the person [or issue] criticised.

The message in newspaper articles work through politicised and culturally specific codes that have been 'profoundly naturalised' by the language in which it is contained (Hall, 1980, 132). The sensibility concealed in language allows the reader to feel aligned with the episteme of the journalist. The result of this comfort and security leaves the reader susceptible to connotations and deep-rooted messages encoded within the language, because he/she is led to believe by the language used, that the author is working in the same ideological code and sensibilities (Hall, 1994).

It is common for journalists to use selective language to slant article's commentary in favour of a particular disposition. The utilisation of selective language to distort argument is termed the 'technologization of discourse' by Fairclough (1992, p231). The use of language is an art, journalists can make commentary appear as though it is simply representing the issue, but really the pseudofactual language has a Janus face that is engineered to lead the reader to a *cul-de-sac* that contains a prominent message.

In factual terms the narrative represented in these instances is not incorrect, but neither is it representative of all sides of the truth. It is simply a case of skewing knowledge by providing a perspective that is given unconditional status; this is something that Socrates would describe as a 'noble lie' (Pappas, 1995, p71). The selective truth is 'noble because it resembles the truths' (*ibid*); only there are some omissions, but the truth that is evident is wholly moral and therefore honourable deception because the reader is not a total stranger to the truth.

One reason that newspapers use selective knowledge is because they are profit-making enterprises under pressure from commercial imperatives to maximise revenue. The newspaper's ideological position has to be aligned with the belief systems inherent in its popular readership in order for it to be consumable to its targeted audience. When newspapers fail to achieve this tandem, the readership is potentially unable to relate to the commentary and turn against the newspaper. Nowhere better than on Merseyside exemplifies this where the *Sun* newspaper was burned in the streets of Kirby and the 'rag', as it is affectionately now known, was boycotted after the newspaper printed some of most abhorrent lies about Scousers in the aftermath of the Hillsborough tragedy where 96 football fans died. Newspapers therefore have to maintain a balancing act of retaining their appeal to the targeted consumers, whilst at the same time negotiating the language of the commentary to embrace a particular message. Conboy, (*ibid*, p13) comments:

> [T]he truly popular newspaper has always been based on a flexible and responsive relationship with its readership expressed in its mode of address and its rhetoric, combined with its ability to project this to a large audience.

As well as capturing the political zeitgeist of the targeted audience, journalists are also under pressure to convey messages that promote the ideological stance of the newspaper's proprietorship (Timms, 1986). Williams and Miller (1998, p162) distinguish this point about proprietorial influence by exemplifying the *Mirror* newspaper owner Robert Maxwell's interest in the issue of AIDS: 'it meant doing more stories about AIDS and what it was and more stories about the National AIDS Trust and things like that'.

The journalist's job of considering the commercial implications of a story, and the duty of staying in line with the supremo's opinions is the equivalent to dancing on the head of a pin. It entails a slippery compromise, and on occasions the negotiation between the two

aspects has resulted in tensions between the readers and the editorial, which have posed an ultimatum in 'the conflicting demands of propaganda and profit' (Curran, 2002, p199).

Journalists are the public face of the giant media empires whose proprietors enjoy relative opacity. Journalists are the puppets of the media moguls – the lobby fodder for their emperors, who utilise newspapers as a medium to communicate their ideology. This is the purest form of subterfuge, which means that newspaper journalists work on a three-edged spear wherein: they are under pressure from commercial imperatives, the media proprietor, and personal aspirations and ideological beliefs (Curran, 2002).

The newspaper media and politics often share a complicated relationship. This is reflected in Rupert Murdoch's decision to allow his giant media group *News Corporation,* which includes the enormously influential *Sun* newspaper, to back Tony Blair's New Labour in the 1997 general elections. This was a perplexing u-turn by Murdoch since his political aspirations are well known to be anchored with the Conservative Party (Williams and Miller, 1998).

It was only after New Labour's landslide victory in 1997, it emerged that Tony Blair and media mogul Rupert Murdoch had reached an agreement to serve each other interests (Curran, 2002). In repayment for supporting Blair's election campaign, Murdoch could expect the relaxing of media licensing regulations from New Labour. With these deregulation measures, Murdoch would be enabled to expand his media empire into television and radio. Rupert Murdoch is the king of these 'tactical partnerships' that show the way politics and the media can work interdependently to benefit a variety of political and commercial interests (Curran, 2002, p96).

Readers of newspapers are perhaps unaware that newspapers subscribe to certain agendas and have specific motives ingrained into commentary. It ought to be a concern that the social significance of newspapers is being manipulated to benefit the agenda of the newspaper, and readers may be reading newspapers at face value, divulging the authors 'preferred' message and ultimately voting with a false conscious (Hall, 1980, p134).

The complex paradigm of reading and writing

Influential writer Stuart Hall (1994) believes the transmission of knowledge through language is a complex process because of the polysemous nature of language. Hall's (*ibid*) theory of encoding and decoding language focuses on the potential for readers to misread, or misunderstand the intended message because reading is an individualistic activity that does not always follow the path prescribed by the author. Hall (*ibid*, p135) articulates this point:

> [T]here is no necessary correspondence between encoding and
> decoding, the former can attempt to "prefer" but cannot prescribe
> or guarantee the latter, which has its own condition of existence.

Journalists writing for newspapers will embed language with dominant connotation to lead readers to a 'preferred meaning' by attempting to encompass it in a common sense framework (Hall, 1980, p134). Hall (*ibid*) explains that journalists encode language with dominant:

> [R]ules of competence and use, of logic-in-use – which seek[s]
> actively to *enforce* or *pre-fer* one semantic domain over another.

The language employed by journalists helps to promote the common sense in the discursive position. The journalist can use language to permeate 'preferred meanings' (Hall, 1980, p134) but the intention may not seep through to the reader. Hall (*ibid*) explains that the lack of coherence between the reader and author is an occurrence due to the reader's autonomy in reading the article. When the reader's system of decoding to make sense of the commentary is not compatible with the intentions of the author, the preferred meaning is missed (Hall, 1994).

Hall (1994) emphasised that encoding and decoding are independent moments, and their existence is not always interdependent. The individual moments of writing and reading can relate to one another to connect, and this is when the two moments can be separate with their own climate and existence, but still feed from one another in a common sense framework to lead to what Hall describes as the 'preferred meaning' (Hall, 1980, p134).

In order to understand how knowledge is transmitted from the journalist to the reader, it is useful to imagine a communication circuit encompassing individual spaces denoting how, and in what way, the author's message is purchased (Hall, 1994).

The moments or pockets where the transaction of knowledge takes place are dimension on their own; they have localised conditions of existence disconnected from the circuit in which they reside in. It is possible to exemplify this by depicting a journalist writing from the perspective of a property owner in a leafy Cotswold suburb in Gloustershire, and the reader being an inner city London service sector worker. There are obvious differences in this generalisation, but the point is that both, the reader and author operate within the same society but have very different lives, and this is why within the communication circuit, each moment of encoding and decoding are distinctive from the other moments of knowledge transaction.

The communication circuit illuminates the dualisms involved in meaning making and the production of discourse. It places emphasis on the heterogeneous nature of language and localised conditions that readers and authors operate within, potentially leading to a disparity in preferred and actual realisation of the message. Hall (1994, p258) states 'language is an articulation of differences', meaning that encoding and decoding messages in texts do not work in totality.

Readers read texts differently, which means that 'decoding is not homogenous' (Hall, 1994, p257) and there is a danger of a double ordering of the narrative, because of the chameleon-like polysemous nature of language. As Hall (1980, p131) points out, this is problematic for the relationship between the intended and received meaning:

> The codes of encoding and decoding may not be perfectly symmetrical. [The] degree of symmetry – that is, the degrees of 'understanding' and 'misunderstanding' in the communicative exchange – depend on the degrees of symmetry/asymmetry (relations of equivalence) established between the positions of the 'personifications', encoder-producer and decoder-receiver … what are called the 'distortions' or 'misunderstandings' arise precisely from the *lack of equivalence* between the two sides in the communicative exchange.

It is possible to look at Pierre Bourdieu's theory of 'habitus' (Jenkins, 1992, p153) to have one explanation of Hall's idea of asymmetry in encoding and decoding texts. The cultural and social disposition of the reader makes up his/her reading environment. From this 'habitus' (*ibid*), the reader develops psychological and physical actions and reactions that shape his/her worldview, and this determines the ontology and meta-disposition that one will come from.

The localised climate from where the reader is coming influences the organisation of values, individual characteristics, and identities that affects the way in which one reads newspapers. This cultivating process means that individuals read the newspaper's commentary through an individual and personalised lens. Bourdieu advances this theory by stating:

> Linguistic relations are always relations of power (*rapports de force*) and, consequently, cannot be elucidated within the compass of linguistic analysis alone. Even the simplest linguistic exchange brings into play a complex and ramifying web of historical power relations between the speaker, endowed with a specific social authority to varying degrees, as well as between the groups to which they respectively belong (Jenkins, 1992, p154).

Hall (1994) theorises the symbiotic relationship between the production and consumption of messages in newspapers. Hall (1994) attempts to press the notion that there is not, nor can there be fixed meanings to language, which in turn means that there cannot be only a single way of reading and interpreting texts. Hall (1994) explains this point by identifying three positions that readers will adopt when decoding newspapers to deduce a message from the commentary.

The instances where the reader of a newspaper decodes the message exactly as the journalist intended, are described by Hall (1994, p136) as the 'dominant-hegemonic position'. The 'dominant-hegemonic position' describes situations where the reader operates within the dominant code deployed by the journalist, and decodes the language to purchase the 'preferred meaning' (Hall, 1980, p134). To divulge the journalist's intended message, the reader's common senses correlate to those of the journalist. By operating within the dominant code, the reader has followed the path embedded in the language for a perfect communication monologue that Hall (1980, p135) describes as 'perfectly transparent communication'.

The second position in Hall's (1980, p137) theory is the 'negotiated code'. Readers from this position do not fully comprehend the message in the article, but do subscribe to the message to some extent. Readers from this perspective can relate to the 'preferred meaning' (Hall, 1980, p134), but make concessions for their culturally specific climate and conditions. The process of decoding the commentary in newspapers, and making it culturally and socially context specific, are 'determinant moments' in the way the narrative is purchased and realised (Hall, 1980, p129).

The 'negotiated' position to read articles is the most common and the most problematic position identified by Hall (1980, p137). The domineering discourse in society, and the locality that the reader is situated in may be uncompromising and therefore conflicting. This point is taken up by Fairclough (1989, p28) who states: 'the individual is able to act only in so far as there are social conventions to act within'.

The 'negotiated code' refers to instances where the reader decodes the commentary in an independent and personalised manner (Hall, 1980, p137). However, the institutionalised dominant code, or the dominant discourse of society in which this decoding takes place overarches the reader's decoding of the text. It is a situation where the domineering discourse of society takes precedence and the negation is tilted in favour of the popular truths that society subscribes to (Docker, 1994); metaphorically, the reader is subserviently being swept by the tide of populism because of the social conventions established by society.

In the 'negotiated code' (Hall, 1980, p137), the reader is conscious of his/her own 'being' or 'habitus' (Jenkins, 1992, p153), but is paradoxically subordinating this by acting within institutional confines. The 'negotiated code' (*ibid*) is inadvertently facilitating the proliferation and amplification of a common discourse, thus, marginalizing everything that does not conform to this *status quo*. This can be described as the glocalisation of discourse – the grand narrative affecting localised ideology by creating an impulse to part of the populous, pulling the deviant discourses under the umbrella of the dominant discourse.

The final position in Hall's theory of decoding is the possibility for readers to operate within an 'oppositional code' (Hall, 1980, p138). Decoding texts from an oppositional position will deduce an opaque message. The message gleaned in texts from an 'oppositional code' will derive a message that is contradictory to the 'preferred' message (Hall, 1980, p134). The reader will not operate within the 'preferred code', and therefore inserts an alternative framework to the text, which will retotalize the message leading to a misreading of the intended meaning. Thus, adhering to a Bakhtinian perspective where society is made up of 'free people, capable of standing alongside their creator, capable of not agreeing with him [sic] and even [capable] of rebelling against him' [sic] (Docker, 1994, p170).

Although it has been a deliberate act to go to great lengths to explain that reading is a 'lonely' and individualistic activity, it is also important to realise that reading happens in a social arena that is bound by 'institutional expressions' (Hall, 1994, p270) that make it a polysemic rather than pluralistic activity. Reading cannot be, nor would it be desirable, for it to be absolutely pluralistic because the reader is reading in a society, and therefore operates within, and is governed by that society's framework.

'Those he commands move only in command'[1]: Dominant discourse, cultural [re]production and the proliferation of the status quo

Hall's (1994) theory of the reader operating in an 'oppositional code' and unwittingly resisting the hegemonic message in texts, entertains the notion of hegemonic resistance advocated by Louis Althusser in his theory of the superstructure and the mode of production. Hall (1994) adopts Althusser's theory of cultural reproduction through ideological state apparatuses. It is therefore possible to categorise newspapers as a tool of the ruling class, used to retain the hegemonic organisation of society.

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[1] Angus in Macbeth Scene ii: Act V The Country Near Dunsinane.

Hall (1994) differs from Althusser, in that he considers the media to be more influential in the process of perpetuating the *status quo* than education and the family (Docker, 1994). In either theoreticians perspective cultural reproduction is not a simple linear development; there will be pockets of antiestablishmentarianism, because individuality and independence are a part of human nature. A change to the order of society constitutes many complexities, and idealistic ideological modernisation by those in power is not a straightforward development. Cultural reproduction will not manifest, and the hegemonic order of society cannot be retained when people adopt a position that is 'counter-hegemonic' (Docker, 1994, p62). Docker (*ibid*, p 61) articulates this point:

> [S]ocial formation is a set of complex practices, each with its own specificity, its own relative autonomy; neither the economic, the social, the political nor the ideological can be reduced or collapsed into each other.

The existence of individuality and autonomy means that society cannot be transformed as a totality. Changes to society's structure manifest quicker for some factions, and slower if at all for others. In this post-structural school of thought, society does not change as a whole entity, rather it takes time, and sometimes changes do not ever happen, creating marginalized counter-cultures or subcultures.

The establishment of norms manifested through discourses are conceptualised by Michel Foucault as the key element to proliferate social orders and organise society's structure. To apply Foucault's concept, newspapers are important institutional sites for the creation of meaning in society. This idea is extended by Johnson (1995) who diagrammatically illustrates this concept by disseminating the conceptual map that represents the genealogy of discourse.

Johnson's diagram offers a formula that shows how meaning is not, and cannot be singular, universal nor absolute because meaning happens in a continuous loop in the localised pockets of society. This notion can be exemplified by the word 'snow'. It is a word that signifies a white icy and fluffy substance that falls out of the sky for most of us. However, the same word is translated to twenty-two definitions in Inuit (Eskimo) language, and ice has twelve equivalents (Wayne, 2003, p165). This goes to show that linguistic relativism is a complex paradigm because a word can potentially signify very different worldviews, and therefore how the world is to be experienced.

Meaning making is an interdependent process that feeds from one moment to the next, and it does not routinely work within a fixed formula. To explain this vexed process further, it is worth thinking back to the example of the journalist writing from the perspective of a property owner in a leafy Cotswold suburb in Gloustershire, and the reader being an inner city London service sector worker. This is an exemplar of how a production of meaning can be received very differently to the intention because of very

different conditions of existence, and it entertains the Saussurean theory of linguistics where meaning is 'a socially derived convention rather than [a] natural fact' (Wayne, 2003, p157). The potential disparity between the intended and realised meaning of the commentary further exemplifies Johnson's (1995) loop of the meaning making process. The idea is that because discourses build upon each other, it occurs in a continuous loop of 'production-consumption-realisation, reproduction' (Hall, 1994, p255). Each moment in the loop feeds the next, and then that moment feeds the next and so on. Hall (1980, p129) states:

> [T]he 'object' of theses practices is meaning and messages in the form of signal vehicles of a specific kind organised, like any form of communication or language, through the operation of codes within the systematic chain of a discourse.

In sum, the production of meaning takes places in one specific modality, then it has to be purchased in another specific localised condition before it is realised, so the worldview of the journalist will affect his/her way of interpreting and issue and writing about it in the newspaper, then the reader will read the journalists interpretation and make sense of it in his/her own culturally specific climate, before this 'story' goes on to affect the production of the next discourse (Hall, 1980, p129). Hall (*ibid*) underlines that: 'the moments of 'encoding' and 'decoding' though only 'relatively autonomous' in relation to the communicative process as a whole, are *determinate* moments' in the production of discourse.

It is important here to heed Johnson's (1995) theory, which is resonant with Hall's (1994) encoding/decoding discussed earlier. Both theories are in agreement that discourses are produced in localised individual climates and conditions. However, if the creator of the discourse holds a powerful position, somebody like Rupert Murdoch, then the hierarchical organisation of society enables his or her influential status to overarch the less powerful in society to become a domineering discourse.

Karl Kraus illustrates the power of the media by analogising its lethality to a grenade (Timms, 1986). According to the 'powerful media theory' (Stone, 1987) Kraus's analogy is plausible. The theory suggests knowledge that is derived from newspapers is more influential than other medias, which tend to be more entertainment based in their content (*ibid*). These so-called 'entertainment' based medias according to the theory are more appealing to those in the lower strata of socio-economic status (*ibid*). This statement is substantiated by the National Readership Survey, which found that 87% of newspaper readerships were from upper class status (Tunstall, 1996, p9). Although there are problems with Stone's class segmentation notion, it does suggests a division between level of information flow between the lower and upper stratum of the socio-economic hierarchy.

In the context of Foucault's theory of power and knowledge briefly discussed earlier, the 'powerful media theory' (Stone, 1987) effectively means that those positioned at the upper echelon of the social status ladder will become more powerful with the greater

acquisition of knowledge. 'The assumption here is that as more information is carried in newspapers, those who read newspapers … will surge ahead in knowledge' (*ibid*, p133).

Stone's (1987) theory is plausible because people who read newspapers will become more knowledgeable; conversely, there is also a danger of disempowerment through conforming to the status quo, therefore it is also essential that the readers of newspapers embrace critical thought and a degree of cynicism, because as discussed earlier, newspapers are written within the remits of an agenda. Rabinow (1984, p6) states:

> [T]he real political task in a society such as ours is to criticize [sic] the working of which appear to be both neutral and independent; to criticize them in such a manner that the political violence which has always exercised itself obscurely through them will be unmasked, so that one can fight them.

McNair (1994, p20) inserts newspapers in the 'deviancy amplification model' in which journalism is 'an active social institution, working alongside other institutions such as the legal system and judiciary to regulate and negotiate morality'. The insinuation here is that newspapers manufacture, and have a great deal of control over the construction of a public agenda, which means that newspapers can also regulate what is to be rendered inclusively 'normal' or 'deviant' and exclusive (*ibid*, p19).

The hijacking of the public agenda by newspapers means that not only can:

> The media tell people what to think …, but the media do tell audience members what to think about. Media content sets people's personal agenda of what is important' (Stone, 1987, p134).

Jasperson (1998, 205) expands up on this point by stating that the,

> Media serve as the primary mechanism by which elite opinion is communicated to the public … [the] media do not tell the audience what to think but, rather, what to think about. … Agenda setting, then, explains why certain issues in the information environment are considered to be more important than others by the public.

The media can attach significance to an issue and problematize topics, which gain importance on the common agenda in the public domain. Giving an issue prominence, for example front page news, or by extensively covering the issue and making it appear on the agenda frequently, puts it on a pedestal which is described by Stone (1987, p134) as 'a process of flouridating the water'.

Mikhail Bakhtin's philosophy of language focuses upon the way language is used to proliferate discourse (Fairclough, 2001). Bakhtin was a proponent of the idea that language could be deliberately constructed in a way to promote an ideal. Bakhtin (*ibid*) entertained the notion that every time language is used, it is an attempt to manifest,

and/or retain ideology (*ibid*). This is a significant assertion in the context of this analysis. The idea that the language used in newspaper articles have an ideological value means that language is never at 'degree zero', and always serves an agenda (Hall, 1980, p132).

Bakhtin's theory lays foundation to the notion that newspapers are ideological agents, designed to represent political aspirations or promote a particular school of thought. Wood and Kroger (2000, p4) echo the sentiments from this theory of language stating that:

> Language is not simply a tool for description and a medium of communication (the conventional view), but a social practice, a way of doing things.

The production of discourse by newspapers means that newspapers also have the influence to normalise societal practices and beliefs, they can attach value on particular discourses, potentially having the affect of homogenisation. The process of normalising practices through discourse happens at the sites of interpretation of 'argument, exchange, debate, consultation and speculation' (Docker, 1994, p61). It is exactly at these moments that generate the plausibility of a particular discourse. The moments of interpretation are encoded with an ideology, and the language illuminates the rational and *truthful* nature of that discourse.

The idea that discourses are not axioms, and need language to provide support to their rationality, means that discourses are not watertight entities, rather they shift and change with modernity, which makes them harder to pinpoint and challenge. This point supports the rationale of this analysis: the idea that critical thought needs to be applied holistically, and an understanding of the context is the first step to challenge discourse and popular truths.

Following this trail of thought about dominant discourse production, the insinuation is that those who have the power to regulate discourse have the freedom to legitimise particular ideologies in society.

> [W]e know quite well that we do have the right to say everything, that we cannot just speak of anything in any circumstances whatever, and that not everyone has the right to speak of anything whatever (Foucault 1970, p52).

Foucault (1970) comments on the power relations that exist in society, and who is allowed to set agendas and create discourses. It has already been mentioned that newspapers have the capacity to manifest discourses that are materialised in society through the mass coverage that newspapers allocate. Alexander and Jacobs (1998, p26) comment on the popularisation of discourse through mass representation:

> The media is critically important, not only as a forum of public information, but rather, for public influence, identity and solidarity.

The information contained in newspapers, and the influence it has, is far reaching. National newspapers as a form of mass communication affect masses of people (McQuail, 2000). This means that newspapers are responsible for the creation of certain perceptions and ideologies in society that become popular culture (*ibid*).

Power to the [wealthy] people: Those in society who have it and those who do not

The media can be central to the formation of process, Green (1994, p80) establishes this point by stating: 'surely the most remarkable feature of the modern cultural landscape is the overwhelming dominance of the mass media'. The point Green (1994) makes is about power, and essentially the distribution of it. Readers of newspapers are not on parity of power with journalists, thus, because journalists have the power to give prominence and place significance on issues they regard to be important by influencing the public agenda. This domination of the means of discourse production means that journalists, albeit constricted by the newspaper's ideological position, have a large degree of control of an apparatus that determines livelihoods, moral, principals and ethics.

It is useful to consider messages in newspapers as commodities for readers to purchase. Rather than a structured dialogue conversing about the rationale of the message in the article, the relationship between the reader and journalist is 'one sided' (McQuail, 2000, p40). The communication between the reader and journalist is a monologue and a single perspective. The journalist's message is often given a high degree of respect, and it is influential, because journalists occupy a status that is authoritative, prestigious or even expert. The potential net result here is that truths contained in newspapers often go unchallenged; the message becomes a discourse in society by infiltrating the public agenda through the mass exposure it receives in newspapers. Pilger (1999, p451) succinctly makes this point:

> The infection is insidious. Even the *New York Times* will quote the *Star*. … The *Star* may well have got the story from the *Sun* and around the Murdoch circuit it will go, and before you know it, some awful fiction becomes [the] received truth. … This is the Murdoch effect. … spewing its poison across the whole journalistic landscape.

Foucault (1977, p195) comments on Bentham's Panoptical prison, and uses the idea of surveillance to illustrate the role of ideological apparatuses such as the media, which control the order of society in a big-brother type syndic mechanism. In such a framework, one can be 'seen, but he [sic] does not see; he [sic] is the object of information, never a subject in communication. … And this invisibility is a guarantee of order' (*ibid,* p200).

Foucault (1977) in this profound statement highlights the way in which society is controlled by those in power. Although this concept is dated, it can still be contexualized in contemporary society. The ideological apparatus in this context is the newspaper, and this is regulated by the powerful media owners who are the dark actors behind the smoke screen of the editorial, but still manage the direction of the commentary. Pilger (1999, p449) comments on the power that Rupert Murdoch wields over the *Sun* newspaper's editorial:

> Murdoch prides himself on his ability to choose the right people to edit his newspapers. He remains in close contact with all of them. Kelvin MacKenzie was his 'favourite editor'. … Murdoch personally approved or approved of, much of MacKenzie's unscrupulous behaviour.

It is possible to see that Rupert Murdoch and other media owners stay behind the scenes but have an efficient arrangement to 'induce a state of consciousness of the … [populous] … and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power' relations Foucault (1977, p201). The efficiency of this mechanism lays in the fact that 'power should tend to render its actual exercise unnecessary; that this architectural apparatus should be a machine for creating and sustaining a power relation independent of the person who exercises it' (*ibid*).

Various accounts, notably those from Stuart Hall (Hall, 1977), Pierre Bourdieu (Jenks, 1993) and Antonio Gramsci (*ibid*), have paid scholarly attention to the notion of cultural reproduction and societal gentrification. Althusser adopted the Marxist notion that ideological apparatuses such as national newspapers are used by the bourgeois to maintain the hegemonic power structures in society in which they are the ruling class (Wayne, 2003).

In a Gramscian perspective, power is shared in cultural spaces such as the media (Docker, 1994). In these sites the wealthy capital owning class use the currency of power to bargain with those with less power. The result of these transactions is the formation of popular cultures, which become dominant discourses to serve the purpose of maintaining the circulation of the power paradigm in society.

Docker (1994, p60) explains the Gramscian critique of hegemonic power by stating that, 'the dominant classes strive to frame all competing definitions of reality, all sense of available alternatives, within their own horizon of thought'. This formation of society is described by Docker (1994, p60) as the 'liberal capitalist society'. By this, it is meant that society is not under any form of totalitarian regime, rather power is open to distribution, albeit in a limited way insofar as dominance will always remain with the ruling class

because they have control over the ideological apparatuses. This point is succinctly substantiated by Bennett (1986, p19):

> Such processes neither erase the cultures of subordinate groups,
> nor do they rob 'the people' of their 'true culture': what they do is
> reshuffle those cultures to an ideological and cultural terrain in
> which they can be disconnected from whatever radical impulses
> which may (but need not) have fuelled them and be connected to
> more conservative or, often, downright reactionary cultural and
> ideological tendencies.

Despite being regulated by the ruling class, Conboy (2002, p3) argues that newspapers are successful social institutions because they are inclusive of 'ordinary people'. Newspapers appear to acknowledge and sympathise with the struggles of every folk in society, it is precisely this Janus face that popularises newspapers (*ibid*). Smith (1994, p37) substantiates this point:

> A hegemonic project does not dominate its political subjects to
> pure obedience and it does not even require their unequivocal
> support for its specific demands. It pursues a far more subtle goal,
> namely the vision of the social order itself.

Newspapers are very astute at guising and re-guising to align themselves with the changing contexts of society, to appear as though they are voicing the struggles of the voiceless. Newspapers create agendas that are tactically manufactured to reach out to those who are disenfranchised or marginalized, creating an alliance that appears to be all-inclusive and representational.

Acting as though they are subscribing to the liberation theory - providing a voice to the voiceless, newspapers can advance their ideological position, whilst appearing to be representing those who are dispossessed near the bottom of the power hierarchal structure in society (*ibid*). This is most recently exemplified by the right-wing redtop newspapers fascination with asylum seekers who come 'here' to 'sponge' and pillage from the taxpayer. In sum, the liberation theory works very well as an altruistic pretence for newspapers to infiltrate a perspective on the public landscape.

Following the same line of thought, the 'hegemonic alliance' (Apple, 2003) that newspapers create by representing the less powerful, is a method by which newspapers strategically infiltrate their ideology into the populous. Kraus takes a more radical stance and says that this proxy is a 'corruption of the conscience' (Timms, 1986, p276). It is a way that subaltern classes support the narrative in newspapers with false conscious and

'bad sense' (Apple, 2003, p49), and unwittingly subscribe to the agenda[s] making them popular culture. This is how popular culture and common practices are established and institutionalised through the popular media, it can be described as the self-serving *status quo*.

Karl Kraus substantiates the point that readers of newspapers absorb the legitimacy of the message contained in the articles:

> Through the decades of practice the newspaper reporter has
> brought us to that degree of impoverishment of the imagination
> which makes it possible for us to fight a war of annihilation
> against ourselves. … [A]nd his [sic] abuse of language embellishes
> the abuse of life (Timms, 1986, p276).

Rather than allow the reader to indulge in an objective truth, Kraus is commenting on newspapers use of rhetorical language to fashion perspectives into legitimate and absolute truths. Effectively, the reader is experiencing the world through the epistemological lens of the journalist, Kraus exemplifies this notion by stating: 'the closer the look one takes at a word, the greater the distance from which it looks back'. This 'production of the conscience', as Kraus describes it, is what conceives the manufacturing of popular beliefs through the framing of ones perspective, which in turn manifests a *status quo* (Timms, 1986, p276).

Popular culture is encompassed in the paradigm of discourse, it establishes guidelines for what ought to be the norm in society (Conboy, 2002). Conboy (2002, p8) states:

> [V]iewing popular culture as a set of discourses which define and
> set limitations on the concept and content of a culture claiming to
> represent the people therefore allows us to identify the definitions
> of popular culture as a part of the discourse itself.

However, there are disparities between the definition of popular culture, there appears to be a lack of a tight meaning, this allows newspapers to stretch their definition of popular culture to legitimately lay claim to be representing people's popular views. This rhetorical appeal means that the notion of popular culture is in reality fiction, because popular culture is actually established by newspaper journalists who themselves are under a degree of obligation to represent the views of their bourgeois employers.

In sum then, the idea that popular culture is representational of ordinary people is flawed, because the establishment of normative discourses is reflective of the power relations in

society (Conboy, 2002). This means that popular culture is the result of enterprise instigated by the media, a process that Kraus describes as the 'corrupting influence on culture by the press as an institution' (Timms, 1986, p41).

This section has considered the views of Karl Kraus and other scholarly tenets that have written about power, and the positions of it in society. It has been acknowledged that more contemporary theories have emerged, those from Abercrombie (1994) and (Apple, 2003) for example, who have laid claim to the idea that subordinated classes are dominated because they are subscribing to the hegemonic rules of the higher classes, not because they are blinded by a notional false conscience, but because by doing this they are maximising their place in society.

There is clearly a need to explore these ideas further in relation to what has been written here, however due to the limited scope of this analysis, this is an opening for a future study to expand upon.

The significance of language use, and discourse analysis

Newspapers deliberately use phrases and terms that touch the reader. By way of example the use of the word 'taxpayer' in newspapers is common because it is instantly recognised by the reader as a connectable issue because he/she is a taxpayer. To further illustrate this concept of socio-linguistics, it is worth considering the negative representations for the word 'terrorism' in the media. However, it is conveniently forgotten that one persons perception of a terrorist is another persons freedom fighter.

It is plausible to consider Volosinov's (1973, p.9) much acclaimed philosophy that 'everything ideological possesses meaning: it represents, depicts, or stands for something lying outside itself'. Volosinov's (1973) conception leads to the notion that the semiotics contained in language sponsor ideologies that are not immediately apparent on the face of the text. Volosinov (1973, p14) terms this a process of 'ideological creativity'; essentially this means that language is a virtual entity never absolutely subjective nor totally objective. Language intrinsically is value-free, but the very act of constructing and assembling sentences by selecting specific language is an act that is determined by the author's ideological position, therefore it is a value statement. This then means that the process that underpins the construction of an argument is ideological, and the use of language is a process whereby the argument is laden with an ideological primer to insert connotations in the meaning.

Continuing on a similar logic, Brown and Dowling have devised the 'epistemological paradox' theory (Brown and Dowling, 1998, p8). The 'epistemological paradox' (*ibid*) is

one of the contemporary theories that suggest all meaning is invented or produced and not discovered in a pure form. Meaning from language is perceived rather than purchased, meaning that language is a mechanism that influences a reaction within the context of a situation. This inward flexion, and 'inter-objectivity' as termed by Massumi (2003b, p[n.k]), illustrates Brown and Dowling's (1998) essential point that language as a single entity does not hold any value or meaning, and meaning from language can only be unearthed by contextualising it in the users ontology. In sum, it is impossible to divulge knowledge from language itself, but language provides a framework to make things logical in the reader's own sensibilities (Wayne, 2003).

However, this process of meaning making is problematic because the translation to embody the message in the receiver's epistemology and common senses which safeguards a particular worldview, might change the value of the commentary and potentially transform the meaning it into something different to what was intended by the author. The 'epistemological paradox' is underpinned by the idea that the journalist's epistemological outlook may be different from the reader's. This means the very process of reception and interpretation to make sense of the language, may lead to an invention rather than the discovery of its intended meaning (Brown and Dowling, 1998, p8), thus, returning to Stuart Hall's 'encoding and decoding' theory discussed earlier.

It is important here to recognise that the media is not the only apparatus that influences discourse and social practices. Discourse production is a result of 'multicausality' (Wayne, 2003, p138), a variety of influences rather than a single cause. Therefore, the media by itself cannot be the exclusive agent in defining social norms and perceptions.

Summary

The *raison d'être* of this critique of newspapers is to empower readers of newspapers with knowledge about how newspapers contain agendas that are linked to politics and ideology. In sum, this paper illuminates the notion that newspapers are institutions that contribute to, and govern the production of discourse. The objective of this study was to expose the idea that there is not a single truth, and what is often given the status of unconditional truth in newspapers, is actually a *facade* of the hidden agenda contained in the newspaper's commentary.

The introduction to this paper is concerned with the ways in which all media communication plays a vital role in the living of everyday life. The significant influence of the media is discussed by exemplifying the how newspapers can be powerful agents of social practice. The wider issues of the way in which newspapers work, and how newspapers are intermeshed in a paradigm of politics, people and profitability is illuminated here.

In the examination of language, Stuart Hall's popular theory of encoding and decoding texts served as a point of departure. The intention was to dispel the false notion that language is an absolute entity; rather its malleability lays in its polysemous nature. The

purpose of this section was to expose the fact that reading is to a larger extent an individual activity, and meanings are always in the eye of the beholder. Combining this notion with the thought that language does not have a universal meaning, journalists can encode connotations to arguments, which are designed to deduce preferred meanings. Thus, the argument is that the existence of truth is localised, and susceptible to the influencing *facades* of language. It addition to this, it was emphasized that although reading is an isolated and individual activity, it is affected by influences outside the text, because the moment of decoding takes place within the structures of society.

The next sections revolved around the discussion of power and the uses of it. It is considered how the processes of cultural [re]production, popular culture and the formation of discourse is inextricably related to the ownership of power. Power is contexualized within the apparatus of the media, and it is explained how it is at these ideological sites that a process of normalisation occurs, in essence regulating how one ought to live life.

This paper exposes the notion that newspapers provide a version of the issue in accordance to the agenda that they subscribe to. The upshot of this is that there is not a single truth because there is no such thing as absolute objectivity. For example, the *Independent* newspaper claims to be divorced from a subscription to political ideology is fundamentally flawed, because the very decision to pursue a particular story instead of another is a value statement, or in other words a judgement based on the morals and desires of the journalist or editor, therefore evidencing an impossibility of subject objectivity.

Following this line of logic, truth is only an account of ones worldview through their ontological being. Truth cannot be a universal reality, merely a situational piece of knowledge that has to be understood in the grand narrative that frames it. This is a fundamental feature to acknowledge and understand in order to start the momentum of a sustainable movement of counter-hegemony, and address the inequalities impinged by the order of society.

It is hoped that this paper has gone someway to show that the newspaper industry is rather more culturally, socially and politically important than Rupert Murdoch's analysis: '[a]fter all, we are in the entertainment business' (Pilger, 1999, p450).

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TRACKING SOCIAL ACTION IN
LIBRARY AND INFORMATION WORK WORLDWIDE

by Toni Samek

Action expresses priorities.
Mohandas Gandhi

Background

Librarians' development and articulation of a broad conception of intellectual freedom has been an important and necessary step in the evolution of librarianship into the 21st century. In 2006, our understanding of intellectual freedom far transcends struggles over classic challenges to library resources as well as more recent controversies around open Internet access policies. We grapple continuously with intellectual freedom issues at countless fronts on local, national, and international levels: commercialization of public space, copyright and access to information, cultural destruction, digital preservation and obligations to memory, imposed technologies, anti-terrorism legislation, poverty, privacy, privatization, self-censorship and information suppression, social exclusion, limits to international exchange of ideas, governmental restriction and surveillance of Internet use, transborder data flow, implications of World Trade Organization agreements such as GATS and TRIPS, freedom of inquiry, access of citizens to government information, suspect communities, the contingent worker model, censorship, and a global infrastructure of mass registration and surveillance. At a level of higher magnitude than even these concerns, however, is the unfortunate recognition that the conditions of intellectual freedom are absolutes (e.g. peace not war or fear of war; justice and just law for all; equal opportunity to education for all; the basics of life regardless of class, wealth, and power; sustainability for untold future generations). Indeed, when in August, IFLA's Freedom of Access to Information and Freedom of Expression Committee launched its World Report 2005 on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries titled "Libraries, National Security, Freedom of Information Laws and Social Responsibilities" (a summary of 84 country reports), it sent us a disturbing message: **"the state of intellectual freedom in many parts of the world remains fragile."**

The August IFLA report was heavily reinforced in a December 15, 2005 statement issued by the Special Rapporteur on freedom of opinion and expression of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, Ambeyi Ligabo: "The World Summit on the Information Society has been marked by political considerations and commercial perspectives taking precedence over genuine commitment to the respect for human rights, thus marginalizing debate over the right to freedom of opinion and expression. The "Tunis Commitment", one of the Summit's main outcomes, did not fully reflect the actual nature of the debate, particularly participation by the civil society, nor provide solutions to the problems of Internet governance. Access to information, freedom of speech and freedom of

expression should be at the heart of any further discussion on the information society. … Too many governments are still putting obstacles to people's exercise of freedom of opinion and expression, and particularly media freedom … A good occasion to demonstrate openness and respect for freedom of expression was wasted." [United Nations Press Release. UN Expert: Political and Commercial Considerations Took Precedence Over Human Rights at Information Society Summit." December 15, 2005.]

Responsibilities associated with the role of the librarian in society are encoded in our ethics statements, intellectual freedom statements, and so on. For example, the first directive in the Canadian Library Association *Code of Ethics* is to "support and implement the principles and practices embodied in the current Canadian Library Association *Statement on Intellectual Freedom*". This statement in turn directs that we "have a duty" to uphold the principles of intellectual freedom. I would argue that our duty is our daily strength in a fragile world.

Project

One of the expressed aims of Information for Social Change (ISC) is "to encourage information workers to come together, to share ideas," and "to foster" alternatives. [Excerpt from the ISC website.] Having recently joined the ISC Board, I felt it only appropriate that I share something along these lines. So, this brief article is to alert readers that I am writing a book for CHANDOS (Oxford) Publishing titled *Librarianship and Human Rights: A 21st Century Guide*. The 2006 book is intended to be of practical help to library and information workers worldwide who face issues on which they seek to – AND quite likely have a professional responsibility to -- address at individual, institutional and/or societal levels. The work is grounded in practical, critical, and emancipatory terms; social action is a central theme.

In a 2001 book by Neva Welton and Linda Wolf titled *Global Uprising: Confronting the Tyrannies of the 21st Century: Stories from a New Generation of Activists* (New Society Publishers), the authors identify the following manifestations of social action: anarchism, campaign, cooperation, coalition, infiltration, mass direct action, militancy, mobilization, movement, nontraditional associations and collaboration, nonviolent direct action, organization, refuge, resistance, revitalization, solidarity, struggle, and survival. In *Librarianship and Human Rights*, I adapt each of these broad manifestations to the context of library and information work for social change. I provide examples presented in quoted/excerpted format in order to retain the authentic voices/messages of the actors. Although concentration is on Canada and the U.S., the examples selected also reference numerous other geographical contexts including Africa, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijani, the Balkans, Chile, China, Cuba, Germany, Iceland, IFLA-level work, India, Japan, Kenya, Mexico, North-South cooperation, Pakistan, South-east Asia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, U.K., and Venezuela. For illustration, an example of the broad social action *survival* is treated below in the context of library and information work.

Example: Library services to address poverty, homelessness, and people living on fixed income. Brief Description: "In the wake of recent news reports, the Hunger, Homelessness & Poverty Task Force wishes to express concern about public libraries adopting punitive policies clearly targeted at homeless people. "Odor policies" of the sort enacted by San Luis Obispo County, California, and the "civility campaign" launched by Salt Lake City Library to "teach the homeless, children and others how to behave" (*Deseret Morning News*, 3/9/05) are at best misguided and at worst contribute to the crimiliazation of the poor. Libraries are now participating in a deliberate process that geographer Don Mitchell calls "the annihilation of space by law": The anti-homeless laws being passed in city after city in the United States work in a pernicious way: by redefining what is acceptable behavior in public space, by in effect annihilating the spaces in which people must live, these laws seek simply to annihilate homeless people themselves … we are creating a world in which a whole class of people cannot be— simply because they have no place to be. Homeless people are forced to live and dwell in public places. Why? Because we fail to create adequate, dignified shelter and affordable housing options that provide private space—among other basic human needs—for our most vulnerable citizens. We want to clarify that poor hygiene and homelessness are conditions of extreme poverty, not types of behavior—a view inadvertently promoted by "problem patron" literature in recent years." We challenge policy makers and front-line librarians to review the American Library Association's Policy 61 ("Library Services for Poor People") and ask themselves the following questions: Do I understand the scope of poverty in my community and its human face? Are our programs and services inclusive of all poor people and their needs? Do we actively partner with social service providers and anti-poverty groups? Do we advocate for public funding of programs that help poor people? Do our actions address core problems or simply treat superficial symptoms? … The democratic principles that govern our work demand a humane and informed response to people struggling with homelessness and poverty." [Are Public Libraries Criminalizing Poor People?" March 21, 2005. Hunger, Homelessness & Poverty Task Force. Social Responsibilities Round Table of the American Library Association.]

The *Librarianship and Human Rights* treatment of broad manifestations of social action are reinforced by coverage of more than fifty discrete forms of action. These include: adventurous programming; alternative action programs; alternative conference guides; alternative conference programs; awards; blogs; books; boycotts; campaigns; civic voting; conference/pre-conference activity; coalition; cooperation; court cases; critical dialogue; declarations; dedications; development; disaster response; dissent; documentation; eco-friendly; education; educative approaches; essay contests for scholarships; expositions; fairs; fundraising; government lobbying; grassroots; guides; history; honouring activism; interviews; leadership development; letters; listservs; manifestos; media response; media relations management; meetings with government; memory projects; multidisciplinary and international cooperation; naming responsibly; outreach; petitions; platforms; position statements : posters; press releases; proclamations; products; protests; publishing; rallies; reaffirmations; representation ; resolutions; speaker series; speeches; seminars; student groups; symposiums; texts; translations; and, trustee education.

Benefit

A subtext of Librarianship and Human Rights is to help include (and de-marginalize) within library discourse the agendas of numerous library groups (local, national, and international) who readily identify as progressive, critical, activist, radical, alternative, independent, socially responsible, and/or anarchist in orientation. These groups (e.g., Anarchist Librarians Web, Bibliotek i Samhälle, Cuban Libraries Solidarity Group, El Grupo de Estudios Sociales en Bibliotecología y Documentación, Information for Social Change, Progressive African Library and Information Activists' Group, Progressive Librarians Guild, Radical Reference, Librarians Without Borders, Social Responsibilites Round Table of the American Library Association) represent various points on a continuum of library perspectives, are sometimes complementary in their approach to issues, are sometimes at odds (e.g. Cuban libraries), and ultimately demonstrate both varying degrees of difference and commonality in their social action agendas. For example, lib-plic is an active contemporary international library network of progressive librarians who participate in "exchanging views, submitting early warnings, sending signed petitions or other letters in urgent issues" that threaten libraries and intellectual freedom. But participants in lib-plic "don't have to share a common view on each library or social subject" and "are not obliged to go along with every initiative on the list." However, lib-plic participants do share a common ground. [Bibliotek i Samhälle (BIS) website. "The lib-plic list." http://www.foreningenbis.org/English/lib_plic.html]

Readers are encouraged to track such library rhetoric through the practical examples. In the process, it should become apparent that social action in the context of library and information work involves both so-called "mainstream" and progressive pushes. Historically, the profession's claim to library neutrality drew a line between library issues and so-called non-library issues. This line has been paralleled in a categorical division between library advocacy and library activism. Hopefully, Librarianship and Human Rights will help to blur these artificial lines -- and to expose them as both counter-intuitive and counter-productive to the very nature of our work.

Toni Samek, Author of *Librarianship and Human Rights: a 21ˢᵗ Century Guide,* Chandos Publishing: Oxford, 2006. See: http://www.chandospublishing.com/catalogue/record_detail.php?recordID=82

Academic Freedom Post 9-11: An Issues Report

by Toni Samek

September 28-30, 2005, I attended a *Conference on Academic Freedom Post 9-11* on behalf of the AAS:UA. The conference was organized by the Harry Crowe Foundation and the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT). For full conference information, see: http://www.crowefoundation.ca/

The Harry Crowe Foundation is a registered charity that undertakes education and research on freedom of academic expression, institutional autonomy and the independence of academic research and scholarship.

As you know, CAUT has an active Committee on Academic Freedom. For the <u>CAUT Policy Statement on Academic Freedom</u>, see page 6 of this report or see: http://www.caut.ca/en/policies/academicfreedom.asp

Speakers included: Kent Roach, Allan Manson, Jonathan R. Cole, Robert M. O'Neil, Peter Leuprecht, Ursula Franklin [words read on her behalf by a colleague], Chandler Davis, Lee Lorch, Jon Thompson, Roland Penner, Maureen Webb, Lee Lorch, Joel Lexchin, Nancy Olivieri and Andrew Bone.

I bring the below "collective conference points" to your attention as they relate to the importance of academic freedom to societies (especially knowledge societies) AND the common and public good. Ursula Franklin noted that the protection of one might well require the promotion of the other.

Some conditions for the production and transmission of new knowledge:

- full and frank debate
- trust
- creativity
- collaboration
- innovation
- freedom of inquiry
- freedom of association
- freedom of expression
- access of citizens to government information
- openness
- willingness to speak truth
- recognition of both our rights AND our responsibilities
- recognition that freedom is more than a collection of privileges … we need to protect freedom

Some powerful statements:

- The goal of academic research is to not to convey, but to provoke.
- The goal of academic research is enlightenment, not balance.
- We need to uphold our academic spirit and moral intelligence.
- Most academic freedom cases have been about "free association and political movement", not about subjects [such as mathematics].
- Re Canada's Anti-Terrorism Act, the government of Canada can consider anybody a terrorist.
- Health Canada is complicit in keeping information secret (e.g., Nancy Olivieri case).
- Most people inquiring to CAUT don't want to go public.
- Canadian academics HAVE BEEN visited by CSIS agents and asked about who was at a conference and what they talked about.

A disturbing question:

- Could economic security be mobilized against academic research?

Some of the issues raised and addressed in the context of rights AND responsibilities of scholars and scholarly communities include:

- lessons from the Cold War era (personal experiences reported by Chandler Davis and Lee Lorch)
- lessons from today (personal experience reported by Nancy Olivieri)
- anti-terrorism laws, both in Canadian and international perspective
- surveillance
- harassment of foreign students
- denying scholars entry and access to visas
- atrophy of bio-terrorism research (e.g., anthrax, small pox)
- transmodification of speech into punishable action
- vetting of research topics
- peer review under attack
- corporatization of the university
- access to government information
- attack on scientific consensus ("as if scientific knowledge is negotiable")
- criminology in service of the state
- suspect communities (e.g., Muslim, Asian, activist, protestors and dissenters)
- the academic family
- the nexus between universities, employers, and the state
- globalisation market fundamentalism
- democratic authoritarianism
- internationalizing of universities
- secrecy in research (e.g., health/medical/drug)
- the rise of managerialism
- commodification of education

- pressure from private groups and government (e.g., Iran, Iraq, China, Egypt, Tunisia, Columbia, N. Korea, India, former countries of the Soviet Union)
- climate of fear and the chill
- repressive environment
- self-censorship
- obedience by anticipation
- one voice
- travel advisory re conferences
- security costs of controversial speakers on campuses (yet, "is it not up to the police to protect us?")
- academic research as insurgency
- the contingent worker model
- censorship
- pre-publication review
- ideological controls
- sharing information across national borders
- data torture
- guidance of students
- regulation of publications
- limits to international exchange of ideas
- Patriot Act and surveillance in libraries
- exaggerated fear of tenure track
- political appointments to national committees
- power of the purse to military to recruit in law schools
- refusal to give information about inquiries
- the Australian model in higher education (no more collective bargaining; each employee negotiates one-on-one)
- risk assessment model
- technological capacity
- stifling workload
- passivity
- global infrastructure of mass registration and surveillance (e.g., biometrics)
- re the UK terrorism bill, researchers can be persecuted based on the papers they are examining
- e-mail archive of intimidation
- removal of possibility of speech
- what is the cash value of your reputation [you need a reputation to mount a defamation case] (e.g., Lorraine Weir case at UBC)
- Board of Governors are becoming more intrusive
- U.S. "Student Bill of Rights" now permeating into state law and students use this to bring suits … yet there were/are student grievance processes on campuses
- for-profit ethics boards doing the research reviewing
- suppression of publication
- suing to suppress, not necessarily to win … but to delay and intimidate
- biases in published research
- the independence of journals (to whom are journal editors answerable?)

- human life (e.g., outsourcing of torture/rendering people to countries for torture and death [global gulag]; needless health retesting that harms already sick people, often the poor in developing nations)

Some of our needs:

- We need more empirical study AND anectdotal reports on civil disobedience and academic freedom.
- We need to address the fact that we have tremendous imprecision about the concepts of grievance, balance, and intimidation.
- We need to recognize that we are neglecting the research mission of the university in discussions of academic freedom.
- We need to shift from the rights of the individual to examining the institutional structure, because here are the attacks today … between universities and societies.
- We need to realize that most problems are non-statutory threats (administrative, process, policy, new application of regulations) and NOT as a result of "sweeping changes".
- We need to think broadly. Academic freedom is too narrowly conceived (e.g., often, we don't perceive an issue as an academic freedom issue).
- We need to develop academic freedom training for graduate students and junior faculty.
- We need to improve our rhetoric. Because, for example, Article 19 of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* is insufficient in our definitions of academic freedom. (Article 19 states: "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.")
- We need to recognize that a university culture that breeds disconnect from teaching, breeds other disconnects.
- Every institution should have a policy about visits and interviews by police of academic staff.
- We need to learn to live with dignity and strength and protection for ourselves and for our communities and societies

Note:

For the CAUT travel advisory titled "Travelling to the United States: Your Rights at the Border (June 2005)" see:
http://www.caut.ca/en/publications/traveladvisory/default.asp

Also Note:

The Canadian Library Association (CLA) has a Statement on Intellectual Freedom (see page 7 of this report). And the first directive in CLA's Code of Ethics is to "support and implement the principles and practices embodied in the current Canadian Library Association Statement on Intellectual Freedom". http://www.cla.ca/about/ethics.htm

-- Submitted/presented to the University of Alberta's Association of Faculty Staff Association Council by Toni Samek on November 3, 2005.   Updated Nov. 4, 2005.

CAUT Policy Statement on Academic Freedom

The Canadian Association of University Teachers is dedicated to the promotion and protection of academic freedom. The common good of society depends upon the search for knowledge and truth and its free expression. Academic freedom is essential for these purposes. Academic freedom does not require neutrality on the part of the individual. Rather academic freedom makes commitment possible.

Academic staff, like all other groups and individuals, are entitled to enjoy recognized civil, political, social and cultural rights. Therefore, all academic staff must enjoy freedom of thought, conscience, religion, expression, assembly and association as well as the right to liberty and security of the person and liberty of movement. They must not be hindered or impeded in exercising their civil rights as citizens, including the right to contribute to social change through freely expressing their opinion of state policies and of policies affecting higher education. They must not suffer any penalties simply because of the exercise of such rights.

Academic staff are entitled to the exercise of academic freedom. Academic freedom includes the right, without constriction by prescribed doctrine, to freedom of teaching and discussion, freedom in carrying out research and disseminating and publishing the results thereof, freedom in producing and performing creative works, freedom to engage in service to the institution and the community, freedom to express freely their opinion about the institution, its administration, or the system in which they work, freedom from institutional censorship and freedom to participate in professional or representative academic bodies.

Academic staff must not be forced to teach against their own best knowledge and conscience or be forced to use curricula and methods contrary to national and international human rights standards. Academic staff must play the predominant role in determining the curriculum and assessment standards.

All academic staff must have the right to fulfill their functions without discrimination of any kind and without fear of repression by the state or any other source.

Amended and approved by the CAUT Academic Freedom & Tenure Committee, December 2002; Approved by the CAUT Council, May 2003.

http://www.caut.ca/en/policies/academicfreedom.asp

Canadian Library Association Statement on Intellectual Freedom

All persons in Canada have the fundamental right, as embodied in the nation's Bill of Rights and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, to have access to all expressions of knowledge, creativity and intellectual activity, and to express their thoughts publicly. This right to intellectual freedom, under the law, is essential to the health and development of Canadian society.

Libraries have a basic responsibility for the development and maintenance of intellectual freedom.

It is the responsibility of libraries to guarantee and facilitate access to all expressions of knowledge and intellectual activity, including those which some elements of society may consider to be unconventional, unpopular or unacceptable. To this end, libraries shall acquire and make available the widest variety of materials.

It is the responsibility of libraries to guarantee the right of free expression by making available all the library's public facilities and services to all individuals and groups who need them.

Libraries should resist all efforts to limit the exercise of these responsibilities while recognizing the right of criticism by individuals and groups.

Both employees and employers in libraries have a duty, in addition to their institutional responsibilities, to uphold these principles.

Approved by Executive Council ~ June 27, 1974; Amended November 17, 1983; and November 18, 1985.

http://www.cla.ca/about/intfreed.htm

Discussion on the education White Paper for England and Extensions of the Commodification Process in Libraries and Schools[1]

Ruth Rikowski and Glenn Rikowski

The UK Government's education White Paper came hot off the press on 25th October 2005. It applies only to England[2]. Glenn Rikowski has been analysing the trend towards the 'business takeover of schools' in England for some years now. The education White Paper witnessed the deepening of this process; some of his worst fears were coming to pass (especially regarding proposals that would develop further the marketisation of schools). But out of a negative appeared a positive: a chance to talk about it all on BBC Radio 4, on the programme *The World Tonight*, on the evening of the 25th October 2005 – the day the White Paper came out!

'The business takeover of schools' – scaremongering talk many would argue. Even some on the educational Left say that there is nothing to worry about and that it will not happen anyway (e.g. Hatcher, 2005). This is what Stephen Timms MP, who at the time was the UK Schools Minister basically said to Glenn Rikowski, when he spoke to him about this topic in relation to the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) in 2002. 'The business takeover of schools': this is not complete privatisation (where companies *own* the schools) but where companies move into schools and work to a contract in order to make profits. Once that has been accomplished, it then paves the way to bring in the GATS, which is an agreement that is being developed at the World Trade Organisation (WTO), that we have both written extensively about in relation to libraries and information (Ruth) and schools in England (Glenn). But it was Glenn Rikowski that first got into this area, with his little book, *The Battle in Seattle: its significance for education* (2001). The GATS is about the liberalisation of trade in services. So, once elements of commercialisation and privatisation have been introduced, this then paves the way to enable large multinational companies to gradually start to make inroads into our state-funded services, and this includes our schools and our libraries.

In conversation with Glenn, Timms denied this basic point. Yet, with the White Paper, we witness a further step along this road in England.

On *The World Tonight*, Glenn spoke about the 2002 Education Act (Her Majesty's Government, 2002), which, as he pointed out:

> *…enabled schools to set themselves up as companies, to trade with other companies, to trade on the stock exchange and so on…*

He then emphasised how the White Paper was an extension of this Act, with the further development of federations, academies and new Trusts, resulting in opportunities for companies to be able to make further inroads into the state schools system.

Jacqui Smith, the Schools Minister, spoke about the White Paper on the programme, saying that its aim was to get the state school sector to work more closely with independent schools, academies, specialist schools, and to achieve 'standards of excellence'. She argued further that this is the purpose of the White Paper, and that it is not about the privatisation of schools.

According to Smith:

> *…there are lessons to be learnt from academies, from specialist schools about the contribution that external partners can make to helping to drive improvement in schools. We are thinking about charitable Trusts set up, perhaps, with educational foundations, with successful schools setting up Trusts so that they can share good practice with others.*

However, Ian Gibson, a back bench Labour MP also on *The World Tonight* programme, was sceptical about the extent to which independent schools would want to be involved in state education anyway. Whilst Jonathan Shepherd, General Secretary of the Independent Schools Council, representing over 1,200 independent schools, in discussion with Glenn Rikowski on the programme, seemed to think that it could work, and indeed could work very effectively. Jonathan Shepherd said:

> *We are working in partnership with the maintained sector already. I think the Trust model gives our schools a chance to get more involved, to make more of a contribution and I am very sure that a lot of schools would want to do that.*

He continued, saying:

> *The boundaries have been becoming increasingly blurred over the past few years, and there is much more cooperation, there is much more realisation on both sides, that we are all in the same business of trying to educate children…*

The main focus of the programme was on this notion of a growing partnership between the independent schools sector and the state school sector, as outlined in the White Paper, but Glenn broadened the topic out to wider and ultimately more threatening issues. It is these wider issues that we need to maintain a firm grasp of and understanding about. And these wider issues relate to library services as well.

To appreciate the real threat, we need to understand global capitalism, and in order to effectively grasp this we need to go back to the writings of Karl Marx. Then, we need to make Marxism relevant to the world that we find ourselves in today. For this, we need to start with the ***commodity.*** Marx began his analysis of capitalism, in *Capital Vol. 1*, with the commodity, saying that:

> *The wealth of those societies in which the capitalist mode of production prevails, presents itself as an 'immense accumulation of commodities', its unit being a single commodity. Our investigation must therefore begin with the analysis of a commodity.* (Marx, 1887, p. 43)

The logic of capitalism is the commodification of all that surrounds us. As a completed, total project, this is impossible in reality; but this is because *practically* capitalism is a madhouse, based on irresolvable contradictions. Yet nevertheless, it drives towards the

commodification of the whole of social existence; despite (and because of) the resistance of labour. This is because it is a system that has evolved out of previous social systems – it is not a social, economic and political system that we have arrived at by using our intellect and by deciding that this is a better system than any other social, economic and political system. As Ruth says in her book, *Globalisation, Information and Libraries* (2005a):

> *Capitalism is a social system that has emerged/evolved from other social systems, such as feudalism and ancient slave-based societies. It is not a system that has developed as a result of a carefully thought-through process, using our intellect to think about what would be the best social, economic and political system to have. It is anarchic.* (R. Rikowski, 2005a, p. 298)

Thus, what we are actually witnessing here with the education White Paper and with many other papers, agreements and directives etc. that are being introduced today globally, is the extension of the commodification process. Capitalism needs to commodify more and more areas of life. The World Trade Organisation has been set up to enhance trade – and trade is about selling commodities. So, in order to enhance this process there need to be more commodities that can be traded. The agreements being set up at the WTO assist with the extension of this commodification process.

In various published works Ruth has focused on the two agreements that are likely to have significant implications for libraries and information: namely, the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) and the agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS). Glenn, in his published works, has focused on the implications of the GATS for schools in England. The GATS and TRIPS are in essence about transforming services (through GATS) and intellectual property rights (through TRIPS) into international tradable commodities.

So let us return to the ***commodity***. We have to appreciate fully the fact that we need to begin our analysis of capitalism with the commodity. Furthermore, that value that is created by labour, and can only ever be created by labour becomes embedded in the commodity. As Marx said:

> *...human labour creates value, but is not itself value. It becomes value only in its congealed state, when embodied in the form of some object.* (Marx, 1887, p. 57)

These commodities are then sold in the market-place, profits are made (and profits are derived from value) and thus capitalism is sustained and perpetuated, whilst labour is exploited, alienated and objectified. Therefore, the aim in capitalism is to commodify more and more areas of life, and the GATS and TRIPS assist with this process.

Coming back to the education White Paper, this can actually be seen to be a mechanism that will help to enable the GATS to take effect. It is, in fact, one of the *National Faces of the GATS*, which is a concept that Glenn Rikowski formulated, and that Ruth has applied to public libraries. Ruth has argued that Best Value, Library Standards and the People's Network are all examples of the *National Faces of the GATS* – i.e. they are mechanisms and *facilitators* that will *enable* the GATS to take effect in our public libraries. They generate an environment that enables service suppliers other than state-run local

authorities to start to take a hold, and this brings in the international legal framework of the GATS in its wake and also opens up UK services to international capital (see R. Rikowski, 2005a and R. Rikowski, 2002a and 2002b).

Thus, the education White Paper outlines its vision for the setting up of Trusts and academies etc – but as strictly 'not-for-profit' organisations, as Jacqui Smith, the Schools Minister emphasises. However, once this type of school system is in place, it creates an environment of alternative suppliers, beyond the local education authority. This is already taking place anyway, as both Robin Lustig, *The World Tonight* presenter, and Glenn Rikowski made clear on the radio programme. Robin Lustig refers to 'Edu-Business' companies, and Glenn emphasises how some local education authorities themselves are already being run by companies, and that some individual schools are being run by companies on contract (see G. Rikowski, 2005a). Therefore, whilst the White Paper is not proposing to bring in 'for-profit' organisations into the state schools system (specifically in relation to the new Trusts), it will create an environment that will enable this process to be extended and exacerbated: i.e. it is a *National Face of the GATS.* Thus, despite what Jacqui Smith might say, this is what the White Paper is fundamentally about: part of the beginning of the business takeover of the state school system, and beyond this, to the commodification of educational services in the UK in general and also throughout the European Union.

Furthermore, as Glenn Rikowski (2005b) has noted, although the White Paper says that Trusts cannot make money (and indeed must pass down any surpluses to their constituent schools), there is nothing in the White Paper that says *schools* cannot make profits; or that *companies* running schools cannot do so; or that the companies that schools can set up under Education Act 2002 cannot do so. These subtle points are ignored by those such as Richard Hatcher (2005). Hatcher implies that just because the White Paper says that Trusts cannot make profits then no profits can be made in the schools sector in England. Hatcher's limited analysis (in Hatcher, 2005) fails to take into account Education Act 2002, which provided a legal framework for the following:

- School governing bodies can constitute themselves as companies

- Once they have set themselves up as companies, schools can invest in other companies

- School companies can enter into deals with private sector operators

- School companies can be part of a 'federation' or chain of schools. Private companies can lead these federations

- Schools can also set up educational services and sell them to other schools

- The Secretary of State for Education has the power to form companies for involvement in any area of school life or local education authority service

(Rikowski, G. 2003, p.99)

Education Act 2002 is not referred to in the White Paper, and therefore these measures may be unaffected by the Education Bill to come in February 2006 (and subsequent Act).

Hatcher (2005) has also argued that companies cannot make sufficient profits out of schools. But as Glenn demonstrated (2005b), this is just wishful thinking on Hatcher's part. Certainly there are representatives of companies that want to get more involved in running state schools for profit and who believe that adequate profits can be made – if the *conditions* are right. For them, it is up to the government to provide the legislative framework so that profits can be made out of running state schools. People like Sunny Varkey, the Dubai-based owner of the Global Education Management Systems (GEMS) international chain of private schools, believe that private companies running state schools for profit is the way forward:

> *Entrepreneurs will be given free reign in running state schools within years according to Sunny Varkey, the Dubai-based businessman who set out to revolutionise the private education market. "The US has sent a man to the moon and they are still having problems with education", he says. "This is the only industry that is still controlled by most of the governments in the world and almost all of them are having problems with it"* (Boone, 2005)

The Confederation of British Industry, in a report published early last year, argued that due to various shortcomings in the state school system more private operators should be brought in to run schools (see CBI, 2005).

Dave Hill (2005), drawing on data from his International Labour Organisation research on the impact of neoliberalism, globalisation and commodification on educational services and on education workers' rights and working conditions, has argued that capital has a 'number of plans with respect to education' (p.259). One of these plans – the *capitalist plan in education* – is:

> *... to smooth the way for direct profit-taking/profiteering from education. It is about how capital wants to make direct profits from education. This centres on setting business 'free' in education for profit-making and profit-taking by capital, extracting profits from privately controlled/owned schools and colleges or aspects of their functioning. Common mechanisms are, for example, from managing, advising, controlling and owning them* (Hill, 2005, p.260)

The education White Paper does indeed 'smooth the way' (after Hill, 2005) for direct profit-making from the schools system in England by private sector outfits of the likes of Sunny Varkey's GEMS, Chris Woodhead's Cognita company, various 'edubusinesses' and large services companies, as Glenn Rikowski (2005b) indicates.

Thus, ultimately the education White Paper leads to the extension of the commodification process and to further marketisation. As Glenn says:

> *All-in-all, the White Paper promotes 'freer' markets for educational services in schools... In deepening market relations in the state schools system in England, the White Paper opens the door further to capital and the capitalisation of schools.* (G. Rikowski, 2005b, p.6)

Furthermore, that:

> *…neoliberalism…in general and when applied to the schools system in England, is about the development of capital as well as markets, which takes us into the realm of the commodity and commodification – with value, surplus value and profit in tow. Neoliberalism nurtures the*

development of capital and seeks to crash down any barriers to capital accumulation. (G. Rikowski, 2005b, p.4)

Thus, we need to recognise and appreciate the fact that it was Marx that said that we need to begin our analysis of capitalism with the commodity and that it is the commodification process that we see that is being exacerbated and enhanced today; through this education White Paper, through the GATS and the TRIPS and the WTO in general, and indeed, in many, many other areas within contemporary global capitalism.

In terms of Ruth's work, she consistently endeavours to alert the library and information profession to the dangers that are being posed to the profession through the GATS and TRIPS, and how these agreements threaten many of the fundamental principles in the profession, such as the balance in copyright and a free public library service. Furthermore, that there is a need for more in-depth Marxist analysis about various developments in the profession. Toni Samek (2005) says in her review of Ruth's book in *Feliciter,* the Canadian Library Association journal:

> *In a profession that is regrettably light on theory, the fresh Marxist analysis offered here is an exceptionally important contribution to our literature. In essence, Rikowski urges us to envision alternatives to the status quo in order to redress the balance in the free flow of information. This is a remarkable book and I highly recommend it for all library sectors and constituencies, including LIS schools.*

Thus, let us return to Marx, use the tools and concepts that he gave us to examine and analyse what is going on in the global capitalist world that we find ourselves in today. From this, we will then be in a strong position to be able to look for an alternative society, where the needs of people are put before profit. Let us look towards a better future and a brighter world.

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Agreements', *Feliciter*, the journal of the Canadian Library Association, Vol. 51, No. 5, p.246

NOTES:

1. This is an edited and extended version of *A discussion on 'The World Tonight', BBC Radio 4 programme, 25ᵗʰ October 2005, 10.00pm, about the UK Government Education White Paper and links with the GATS, Library Services, Education Services and the extension of the commodification process* (Rikowski, R. 2005b) in *Managing Information Forum*, 22ⁿᵈ November, with comments from three respondents: http://www.managinginformation.com/Forum/index.php?act=Print&client=printer&f=2&t=217

2. The forthcoming Education Bill (February 2006) will apply principally to England, but the Welsh Assembly will consider the Bill in terms of which of the provisions and powers are to be extended to Wales (see Her Majesty's Government, 2005, p.116).

Websites

Visit the Rikowski website at http://www.flowideas.co.uk

Visit *The Volumizer*, Glenn Rikowski's web log at: http://journals.aol.co.uk/rikowskigr/Volumizer/

Transcription of the 'World Tonight' programme, compiled by Ruth and Glenn Rikowski is available at: http://www.flowideas.co.uk/?page=perform&sub=Radio%20Programme%20Transcriptions
And also at Information for Social Change web site: http://libr.org/ISC/

Further Information regarding the Education White Paper

Schools White Paper: Highlights – links to documents relating to the White Paper: http://www.dfes.gov.uk/highlights/article06.shtml

The White Paper – PDF and Word downloads from: http://www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/schoolswhitepaper/

Press Release on the White Paper: http://www.dfes.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2005_0124

The Prime Minister's Presentation on reforming the school system: http://www.number-10.gov.uk/output/Page8333.asp

Parliamentary Speech: Secretary of State for Education, Ruth Kelly, presents the White Paper to Parliament: http://www.parliament.the-stationery-office.co.uk/pa/cm200506/cmhansrd/cm051025/debtext/51025-05.htm#51025-05_spmin3

Ruth Rikowski and **Glenn Rikowski**, *London, 4ᵗʰ January 2006*

Starting to Write for the Information Sector: Some Experiences.

Paul Catherall, Career Development Group Wales Division.

In recent years, the Information Sector has witnessed significant change, most visibly in the form of digitisation and the growing prevalence of Information Technology. There is a constant challenge to maintain awareness of current developments, not only in terms of Information Technology, but also in areas such as Copyright, Accessibility and Freedom of Information to name a few. The Information Sector has seen a growing demand for accessible information on these issues and there is an unprecedented opportunity for staff within the sector to share experiences and expertise in this climate of rapid change.

Over the last few years, I have become fairly active in writing for the Information Sector. To give you some idea about my background, I worked for several years as a library assistant at NEWI, Wrexham, whilst completing a BA in Literature and Media studies (1999) and an MA in Library and Information Management (2000). In October 2000, I took a new post in Web development and e-learning within the same Higher Education institution; over the following years I also taught intermediate IT with a local community college and undertook CILIP Chartership (with what was then the Library Association).

Sometime in late 2003, I began to consider research as a focus for developing my own expertise and skills and by October 2004 I had enrolled with Manchester Metropolitan University to begin a 5-6 year research programme; the topic chosen was initially Web-based accessibility, but later I decided to focus on 'Distributed learning' (i.e. a form of teaching combining both class-based study and use of e-learning) amongst Part-Time students studying vocation-based subjects such as social work or teaching.

In Spring 2004, whilst enquiring amongst research institutes, I was approached by an editor for the Chandos publishing company (Ruth Rikowski), a well-known Library and Information Science academic who asked me if I would like to write for the Chandos Series for Information Professionals; I initially considered a very tentative and limited contribution, but having submitted a plan, Ruth indicated this could form the basis of a stand-alone text. I finally chose to write on the general theme of e-learning in Higher Education, including the background to Web-based learning, the features found in e-learning systems and a wide range of related issues. Perhaps the main reason I chose e-learning for the text, was because my preparatory study was already underway for my research degree and the two activities seemed to complement each other. The agreed title of the text became *Delivering E-Learning for Information Services in Higher Education.*

The text consisted of eight chapters (with numerous sub-sections); the chapters included: Introduction to e-learning, Virtual learning environments, Managing the virtual learning environment, Training and user support, Accessibility and legal issues, Other online learning tools, Quality assurance and monitoring (and a Conclusion chapter).

Whilst I found it demanding to write such a long text (about 60,000 words), I was able to manage the project by writing fairly small sections each day (sometimes only a few hundred words). Although maintaining momentum was difficult, I overcame this challenge by strictly limiting each sub-section to an allocated length and by setting deadlines for the completion of each chapter. I worked to a strict plan (agreed with Chandos) and treated the writing like a regular project with fairly fixed deadlines.

Professional contacts and acquaintances were important throughout the project, including IT experts and library staff from around the UK; most of these individuals provided useful comments on my text as it progressed and some actually made incidental contributions for inclusion in the text (such as short system reviews or case studies derived from a survey I had conducted). Other individuals provided expert advice on technical issues. All these contributions were cited in the opening pages of the text.

Once the actual writing was complete, the process of creating the supporting documents began, including formalising the Contents page, the Index, the Bibliography, Glossary of Terms and the Appendices, which provided a quick reference for crucial aspects of the text (such as a list of URLs for Web resources and a checklist for Web accessibility auditing). I worked closely with a copy-editor at Chandos to finalise the layout of the text; the cover design was also handled by Chandos, using a generic but attractive technical/ abstract image used for the whole series.

Finally, in around December 2004 the text was published (in hardcover and soft cover), with good initial sales and re-prints to accommodate demand - a reflection perhaps of the popularity of the subject, but also the global coverage provided by Chandos' marketing department and related companies.

Now, I can reflect on the experience of writing a text focused on the Higher Education Information Sector with a strong IT emphasis. I have a few minor regrets, most notably that I focused the book on Higher Education - whilst this is my own area of experience, I later felt that the book could provide useful information for Further Education, Statutory Education or any organisation delivering e-learning; obviously the title of any work demands careful thought and whilst the title can focus the direction of the writing, it can also limit the marketing potential.

In hindsight, I would perhaps have liked to focus more on pedagogical issues, although I felt at the time that the book should be focused on the practical aspects of system selection and delivery - issues central to the role of an Information Services department.

Since writing my Chandos text, I have gone on to write several articles; the experience has certainly given me confidence in my own abilities to write, to manage projects and to express my research interests through a medium that other individuals within the sector would find interesting and even enjoyable.

For those interested in writing, I would recommend starting to write about topics where you have developed knowledge or expertise, rather than an area about which you are

unfamiliar; awareness of developments surrounding the topic is also highly important, either via Web 'blogs', journals, or other current information sources.

Perhaps it is also worth considering to write a shorter piece before plunging into a full-scale text, such as an article or column; short submissions are usually welcome for regional journals, the newsletters of professional bodies or Web-based journals; articles could reflect subjects such as an event or conference you have attended, your experiences of a project in the workplace or your own thoughts on a current issue affecting the Information Sector.

Additionally, if you have an idea for a full length text or shorter chapter, Ruth Rikowski, Commissioning Editor at Chandos is always happy to discuss your ideas (email: rikowskigr@aol.com), Ruth is always pleased to discuss your writing and offer advice.

Paul Catherall is the author of 'Delivering E-Learning for Information Services in Higher Education', Chandos Publishing, 2004. Paperback (ISBN 1-84334-095-X)
http://www.chandospublishing.com/catalogue/record_detail.php?recordID=48

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Quebec's Heart of Darkness: a review article of Daniel Poliquin's essay on Quebec Nationalism, *In the Name of the Father*, Published by Douglas and McIntyre; Translated by Don Winkler, 2001, $22.95, 222 pages. Initially published as "Le Roman colonial," Les Editions Boreal, 2000

by Julian Samuel

It is with unpretentious erudition and unbridled courage that Franco-Ontarian Daniel Poliquin looks at this object called Quebec "nationalism" - and picks it apart. For a fuller understanding of
Poliquin's courage this "nationalism" ought be contextualized.

Radio-Canada, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and the editors-in-chief of our provincial media, ex cathedra, reject in-depth criticism of Quebec "nationalism". Quebec's old-stock anglophones and the French-Canadian intellectual classes are wholly responsible for practicing
cultural apartheid: there is not a single "visible minority" in a key position within any of Quebec cultural institutions. In Quebec, there is wall-to-wall white, pre-rational modernity. This aggressive/defensive class of technical media intellectuals (both old-stock anglos and white
francophones) will not publish any historical, political or cultural criticism. Occasionally, to placate the muses of Liberal Democracy a few critical articles or programmes will make it past these gate-keepers. Fully co-operative "visible minorities" do get jobs.

Jean Bernier, chief-editor of Les Editions Boreal says that since its inception in 1963, they have published the work of one black writer. Currently there is not a single black writer on its editorial board. One black in 38 years. Most Quebec journalists would not voluntarily expose so blatant an abuse of public funding. One of the goals of the PQ is to make craven those who might openly criticize things as they are: The fatherland is infallible.

Quebec society is more censorial than the rest of Canada. Le Devoir, Quebec's "right-thinking" "nationalist" (read ethnic nationalist) newspaper does not have a single minority in an editorial position, and it rarely publishes articles that are antithetical to its raison d'etre: the partition of Canada. The Montreal Gazette, backward on the question of Palestine et cetera, frequently published the uglily written separatist tirades of Josée Legault (whom Poliquin ridicules ad infinitum).

In 1995, after loosing his referendum, Jacques Parizeau indirectly encouraged physical violence against "ethnic voters". That night, at the microphone, I remember watching him frothing at the mouth: They lost the referendum because of money (read Jews) and the ethnic vote. Yves Michaud
recently scoffed off the holocaust, while Premier Bernard Laundry intimidates and throttles the anglophone minorities.

It is in this suffocating, censorial atmosphere that Daniel Poliquin has the courage to criticize Quebec's "nationalists". He was trashed in the local press. So was Esther Delisle, author of "The Traitor and the Jew: Anti-Semitism and the delirium of extremist right-wing nationalism in
French Canada from 1929-39," (1993) - it is now impossible for her to get a teaching job in Quebec.

Why has it taken so long for Canada to secrete a social critic of Poliquin's stature? Why all the centuries of silence in our "few acres of snow"?

Through insightful anecdotes Poliquin expresses himself without masturbatory post-modernist flatulence -- rather an accomplishment given the susceptibility of French-Canadian intellectuals to be pulled into the vortex of Parisian jargon-ridden incoherence -- Baudrillard et al., ad nauseam. His honest prose turns Quebec's official history on its head in a tragico-comedic way. In my estimation, since 1759, Poliquin is the second or third (if one counts Pierre Vallières) French-Canadian intellectual to so do.

He exposes provincial "nationalists" as "self-colonized" hypocrites. Poliquin connects Jean-Marie Le Pen, the elegant French racist, with the PQ who are not nearly as elegant in the French language but comparable in other ways. By corollary, Parizeau can be seen as George Wallace, the dead
white ex-governor of Alabama, segregationist par excellence. The continental French left, he writes,

> "...prefers Canada, a space more congenial to its European point of view. It has reason to be wary, especially when it sees Le Pen making common cause with the PQ...Ever since, there has been no doubt: an independent Quebec is for the French left a reactionary aspiration, just as were the origins of New France. Some things never change." p 154

My first quibble with Poliquin is that there is no such thing as Quebec "nationalism." The term 'nationalist' cannot be used to describe Quebecois separatists. In political nomenclature, parties such as the Partie Québécois, Bloc Québécois are not at all nationalists: they are, properly
speaking, revolutionary Provincialists (read ethinc nationalists). The term "nationalist" is far too connected with political victories to be firmly applicable to the people Poliquin inexorably ridicules: Jacques Parizeau, Pierre Bourgault, Monique Simard, Guy Bouthillier, Lucien Bouchard,
Philippe Paré, Bernard Landry et cetera. If the Vietnamese General, Vo Nguyen Giap -- who devastated French imperialism at Dien Bien Phu in 1954 -- is a Nationalist then are Lucien Bouchard and Monique Simard nationalists as well? No. Are they in anyway like the brave Algerian Nationalists who achieved liberation in 1962? Only a true revolutionary
Provincialist would put Jawaharlal Nehru, or the eloquent Black Nationalist Malcolm X in the same league as Guy Bouthillier, head of the "right thinking" Societé St-Jean

Baptiste de Montréal and the "right-thinking" Lise Bissonnette, ex-editor-in-chief of Le
Devoir. In Poliquin's book these
intellectuals are portrayed as "right-thinking". Why not "right-wingers"? Fear of law
suits?

A melliferous chapter entitled, "Already Yesterday," with grace, humour, and intelligence
removes one layer of lies after another. It is because of this chapter that Poliquin was
attacked by the technical intellectuals who fear historical truths. Reactionaries from
France re-emerge in New France:

> "For the most part those who thought and wrote in New France were closer to the
> Restoration than the Revolution." (p. 140)

And,

> "But the French Revolution, decried by our clergy, shipped us for the most
> part emigrants like Abbé Calonne, who forgot nothing and learned nothing.
> Our intellectual elite, though titillated at times by the advanced ideas of
> the age, was for the most part four-square for the reactionaries, just as
> it has earlier stood for the apostolic Counter-Revolution." (p. 140)

The theoretical sections "In The Name of the Father" are "cartoonesque" political science.
They are comical and more or less consequential to Poliquin's central thesis. Of course,
Poliquin is no Louis Althusser. Another culture made Althusser. Poliquin shows how
"nationalist" French-Canadians still cling to the tactical model offered in Albert Memmi's
"The Colonizer and the Colonized". Here is a bit on their tragic mal-adaptation:

> "With Mimmi's thesis as a guide, Quebec history was reinterpreted, and the new
> historical school of the 1950's that has already, under Groulx's influence, dropped
> Providence as a historic force, now transformed Quebec into an occupied territory
> and the Québécois into a colonized people in need of liberation... ...Quebec got
> modernity and entered the Third World at the same time." (p. 118)

And,

> "The problem is, there was a problem. May be even two. The first is that Quebec
> was not Memmi's Tunisa. Miron, the Aquin brothers, and the FLQ all made the
> mistake of applying a foreign model to the Quebec situation. The second is that
> their decolonization was accompanied by a recolonization by the same forces that
> were supposed to be avenues to freedom. And so the same Quebec of these
> thinkers was a unique arena in which decolonization and recolonization, in
> parallel, generated a confusion that was fertile,
> dramatic, and farcical. In that order." (p. 120)

The following lines must have stung ethnic nationalists such as Pierre Bourgault:

"The Quebecois were neither Arabs nor the Blacks of Frantz Fanon, they were closer to being Pied Noir themselves. Colonizers more than colonized." (p. 121)

On the successful 1995 referendum Bourgault said, I remind readers:

"That the No vote among Jews, Greeks, Italians and other non-francophones was a 'straight racist' vote." "Jews" "Greeks" "Italians"-- are they not Canadian citizens first?"

On language Poliquin is relentless:

"For instance, Monsieur Bouchard likes to say that he's s'est peinturé dans le coin - has painted himself into a corner. There are plenty of days when you have to know English very well in order to understand the protector of Quebec French."(p 75)

There is no real or great difference between the French spoken by Lucien Bouchard and that of prime minister Jean Chretien who gets picked on simply because he is not a revolutionary Provincialist.

TV interviews with Quebec film-maker Pierre Falardeau are so cluttered with "tsé (tu sais); low, low; (la la) tu vu tu (tu vu) " that his "French" becomes a kind of avant-garde music. For continental French TV and for French cinema audiences Quebec films (Falardeau's in particular) require French subtitles to render them somewhat comprehensible.

Poliquin is aptly critical of Falardeau, projecting him as hick-supreme whose narrow-minded films expose the wooden cogs working in his mind. "Right-thinking" Quebec intellectuals would put Falardeau in the same league of film-makers such as Gillo Pontecorvo, whose 1966 film, "The
Battle of Algiers" confronted both French imperialism AND the pitfalls of Algerian nationalism itself. Since birth, Falardeau has known only one side. Poliquin's targets don't require much in the way of analytical paraphernalia to demolish: Falardeau, Jacques Godbout, Lucien Bouchard,
Lise Bissonnette, Josée Legault -- thunderous challengers?

Despite the intense veracity of his arguments, Poliquin has blind spots. There are only a few. He is a supporter of Bill 101. This makes him a soft Quebec "nationalist". This wretched legal instrument is continually used by the Quebec government to keep most cultural institutions and Quebec culture at large free of blacks, "immigrants" (Canadian Citizens) and Jews. Bill 101 is White Affirmative Action Gone Wild.

"Visible minorities": the current provincial government has hired fewer than 3 per cent. "Les autres" constitute 18.5 per cent of the provincial population and a significant part of the tax base. Poliquin has not exposed the fact that the tax contributions of "les autres" are snatched and

funneled into the white French-Canadian cultural machinery. Should not Poliquin's analysis touch on economic fundamentals? This would be only fair.

He does not go far enough in his critique of Quebec's ethnic nationalists. Social critics of quality do not fear immolating sacred cows. That is what the cows are there for. His blatant exclusion of a full discussion on the repercussions of a continually hybridizing Quebec is based on an obsession with French-Canadian history, culture and politics. He is blind to "les autres" in Quebec. French-Canadians - at their critical best - ignore them. Of course, many of these 'others' do not care if they are ignored. They just want a fair crack at key positions and money. Poliquin is pusillanimous on
this issue. The unassailable parameters boldly state: Even Soft ethnic nationalists Must Not Attack Bill 101.

Europe and America are continually confronting the idea of evolving, multiracial societies, with mixed success. BBC and Channel Four contain minorities in important positions, not just well-paid fools. If Poliquin is not willing to open up these issues for the French-Canadian mind then who will? They won't listen to the 'outsiders'. He, like those who came before him, talk incessantly of their own culture as something detached from a multiracial Canada which is expanding, not narrowing its definition of citizenship. "Visible minorities" are still considered "immigrants" by the
PQ and BQ. Surely, there is a fear that The Outsider within will outdo The French-Canadian in some way? Or is it simply a question of keeping the jobs and money in white old-stock anglo and French-Canadian hands? We are invisible for a tactical reason. A subsequent book might breach those unassailable parameters that have limited Poliquin's current work on Quebec's ethnic nationalists.

Film-maker and writer Julian Samuel has made a four-hour documentary on Orientalism and has published a novel, Passage to Lahore, [De Lahore à Montréal]. He is currently working on a documentary on the destruction of libraries.
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Room at the Top: cultural bodies in Quebec lack any meaningful minority representation – an article on racism re French and Canada by Julian Samuel

Why are there no visible minorities in key positions at Quebec cultural institutions? Why is Quebec decades behind the rest of Canada on this? Does the mostly all-white local media actively block a public discussion on this issue?

Many Quebecers will contest the charge of racism by mentioning the following famous minorities: Michaelle Jean, Nathalie Chung, Norman Brathwhaite, Gregory Charles, and Dany Laferriere. Racism within Quebec's cultural institutions? Unadulterated codswallop. However, Michaelle Jean
and Nathalie Chung, both RDI newsreaders, are not in key positions; they have little or no influence on the content of the broadcasts. They are stunningly overpaid newsreaders, inoffensive electrons decaying in front of your eyes. Occasionally, Michaelle Jean does programs on Cuba that Jesse Helms would like. Norman Brathwhaite and Gregory Charles are comics who illustrate a hollow pluralism.

International comparisons are relevant. Visible-minority journalists on the United Kingdom's BBC and Channel Four do programs that criticize the British government on issues such as England's racism. Journalist Darcus Howe, and film-makers John Akomfrah and Tariq Ali are among several who have provided the public with critical and entertaining television. The British South Asian comedy serial, Goodness Gracious Me is vicious anti-racist satire. Nothing like it here, not for a lack of talent, either.

What is the advantage of having minorities in decision-making positions? Is there not a risk that things will remain the same? The Canadian track record is not very exciting. However, along with the risk of visible minorities turning out to be dull, there is a slight chance that aspects of a newer more varied political culture could move into the public arena. Europe is ahead of us. The risks out weigh the continued dull, cultural conservatism of our white elites (who protect their jobs tooth and claw). Montreal is a multiracial, multilingual society, yet the following cultural institutions in Montreal remain lily white up at the top. 17 per cent of the tax base is multiracial -- not white anglo nor francophone.

Cultural institutions:

- CBC English radio. Patricia Pleszczynska, head of English Programming for Quebec, says there is one visible minority in a total of seven key positions. All the key positions in local CBC radio programs such the morning program Day Break and the afternoon show Home Run are white.

- Radio Canada; director of public relations Marie Gendron (French services) said that out of 512 directors and managers 14 are visible minorities (2.73 per cent)

- Cinémathèque Québécoise, an institution which programmes films, videos, hosts conferences is all white. The programming is done by six white men: Robert Daudelin, Marco de Blois, Dominique Dugas, Alain Gauthier, Pierre Jutras and Pierre Véronneau. This institution has one black technician.

- Montreal cultural weeklies Hour, Voir, ICI, and Montreal Mirror on average have about 4-6 key editorial positions of which none are visible minorities.

- Conseil des Arts et des Lettres du Québec, a PQ principal arts funder, has five key positions and 50 employees: not a single visible minority in any category.

- Ex-Centris, a private arts institution devoted to film, video and new media, has six key positions; one is held by a visible minor, says Sylvie De Lorimier, director of public relations.

- The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts (the largest museum in Quebec); Stéphane Aquin, a curator at this museum, says that all key positions, including the museums acquisitions committee, are held by whites.

- Musée d'Art Contemporain. Marcel Brisebois, chief curator, says there are six curators and 13 trustees. He refuses to say whether there are any visible minorities at the institution. I know from (regular) personal contact with this institution that there are no visible minorities in curatorial positions.

- The National Film Board of Canada. Suzanne Cote, Training and Equity Advisor, says that there are 12 visible minorities employees in key positions: 9.4% of the total number of 127 employees.

- Societe de Developpement des Entreprises Culturelles (SODEC). This major provincial film funder does not have any visible minorities in seven key positions, such as directors of sections. And, out of a total of 102 employees there are three visible minorities in technical positions says
Nancy Belanger, head of public relations.

- Telefilm Canada. This organization is a major federal funder for films. Jeanine Basile, Communications et Public Affairs Attaché, says out of seven directors of departments there are no visible minorities. And there are 4 members of visible minority groups on staff which consists of 135 people.

Why has this absence of visible minorities not been discussed in the media? In Quebec, decision-makers in most media outlets are white. Blacks appear on the covers of the alternative weeklies if they can rap or do house, but there is little substantive coverage of the issue of racism in Quebec
cultural institutions.

On 8 December, 1998, Radio Canada's Le Point had Stéphane Bureau interview tame playwright René-Daniel Dubois who spouted childishly about Quebec being fascist. Radio-Canada has not yet let visible minority intellectuals have the same extended interview time - 18 minutes and 30 seconds - Dubois had to discuss Quebec's reluctance to include les autres in key cultural
positions. Are only white intellectuals allowed to criticize Quebec culture?

The inexorable exclusion of minorities from key positions within cultural institutions is due to the tribal desire to pass on the best jobs to incumbent white elites, friends and family members. By the inclusion of critical and talented (not token) minorities, Quebec could produce a challenging and refined internationalized culture. Of course, the status quo point-of-view in films, novels and the plastic arts et cetera would drastically change. This change is exactly what the elites are worried
about. If things are played out fairly, they will have to relinquish the easy access they have to funding and jobs. In other countries, critical and talented minorities have produced landmark films such as My Beautiful Launderette (UK; Stephan Fears and Hanif Kureishi, 1986) and Mama, There's a Man in Your Bed (France; Directed by: Coline Serreau, 1989); and novels like Caryl Philips's The Nature of Blood (UK, 1997), and Salman Rushdie's 1988 Satanic Verses. Are our traditional white cultural elites going to produce challenging and innovative works on this level?

Quebec culture would be irreversibly altered if creative visible minorities were allowed to have a say in the direction of cultural production. By maintaining the status quo, only white Quebec will benefit; the exclusion of minorities will make for bitterness and stagnation.

Film-maker and writer Julian Samuel, has made a four- hour documentary on Orientalism and has published a novel, De Lahore à Montréal. You may contact him at
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Quebec's Minorities: Trapped Between Two Solitudes – an article on racism re French and Canada by Julian Samuel

5 December, 2000 Parti Quebecois, Yves Michaud:

> "In the interview on CKAC... I said that the Jewish people were not the only people in the world to have suffered. I said that. Is it anti-Semitic to say that? The Armenians suffered. The Arcadians suffered. And, B'nai Brith wanted to rename the Lionel Groulx metro station. I said they were anti-Quebecois and anti-sovereignist extremists. I don't withdraw those words."

Every time a Parti Quebecois luminary, inebriated or sober, lets go in front of the media, white federalists rejoice. Last December they acted as though Michaud's statements were manna and cream cheese falling from heaven. Politicians gleefully pointed fingers and the cultural elites
wasted vats of ink. Few in the media asked the 'NO' voting minorities themselves what they thought of the issue.

The PQ has consistently accused Quebec's minorities of thwarting its desire to create an independent nation-state. Minorities continue to reject the PQ project of partitioning of Canada along racial lines. It is evident to us that the PQ project is about race and that is why the issue of race comes up more and more often these days. The PQ surpasses even the Canadian Alliance
in verbal race attacks by its enlightened political figures (Parizeau, Laundry, and Bouchard).

In instigating a discussion about the race of "visible" citizens, Michaud and the PQ bring about a tactical awareness of racial differences in the population at large. People are developing a phenomenological knowledge of skin tonalities, pigment, facial features, whether or not people have flat noses, whether they speak with non-pure wool or pure wool accents.

This hyper-awareness of racial, linguistic and facial features is a way for the PQ to exaggerate the differences between white francophones and "les autres." Michaud connects race to voting patterns, as do many American commentators regarding the "black vote", the "Hispanic vote" and less often
mentioned, the "Jewish vote". Notice that Yves Michaud did not comment on the white French-Canadian 'NO' vote in the last referendum. Nor does he mention anything about white the Anglo vote. Why mark out the minority vote? What purpose does it serve?

Partially, here are some reasons why minorities vote no:

White women should have more white babies -- Lucien Bouchard

Money and the ethnic vote -- Jacques Parizeau

Only Quebecers should vote in the referendum (1995) -- Pierre Bourgault

It is because of people like you that we lost our referendum (to a
Canadian-Mexican hotel clerk) -- Bernard Landry

Courts would not see the above statements as actionable even though they resemble the
thinking of Jean-Marie Le Pen and Jurgen Haider. The effect of Michaud's statements is
pernicious. Purely racist statements are actionable and the courts usually punish the
author. In most provinces condemned racists get little support from the public.

The PQ will continue to make racial and linguistic distinctions between citizens -- and
they will do this without getting taken to court. This is the advantage of making
unactionable statements. The PQ modernists believe they have distanced themselves from
Michaud, in an act filled with
sincerity. Minister of Finance Bernard Landry sweats blood; he reluctantly condemns
Michaud. Parizeau, like an old elephant, trumpets his unconditional support for Michaud.
Bouchard shows mock disgust and quits. Readers should remember his 1995 suggestion
to the white women of Quebec.

Why do these verbal attacks persist in 2001? Why are the separatist elites pointing the
finger at us? Why have not Quebec's white anglo journalists taken a serious look at the
lack of racial equality in Quebec?

Visible minority demands are a thorn in the side of Quebec's white anglo elites. By
placing a few handsome, smiling minorities on TV they think they have confronted and
resolved the race issue. Who are they kidding? Michaud, the PQ and Quebec's white
anglos will continue bludgeoning the minorities. What are the provincial Liberals going
to do to help us? Certainly they will not establish any mechanism which will help us get
us the jobs that some of deserve -- key posts in political and cultural institutions. These
jobs are reserved for white anglophones and white francophones:
wall-to-wall White Affirmative Action. More lip service condemning Michaud and
friends is clearly not enough.

Film-maker and writer Julian Samuel, has made a four-hour documentary on Orientalism
and has published a novel Passage to Lahore (De Lahore à Montréal). You may contact
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BOOK REVIEWS

The Battle in Seattle: its Significance for Education by Glenn Rikowski
The Tufnell Press: London, 2001

A Review by Paul Catherall

This book was published as a response to the events surrounding the World Trade Organisation's 3rd Ministerial Conference in Seattle November 1999, when an estimated 40,000 individuals protested against the Geneva-based World Trade Organization (WTO), described in Wikipedia as follows:

> …an international rules-based and member driven organization which oversees a large number of agreements defining the "rules of trade" between its member states… The WTO is the successor to the GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) that was set up in 1947, and operates with the broad goal of reducing or abolishing international trade barriers.
> http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_Trade_Organisation

The opening preface of the book, 'The Morning After Prague' reflects on the continuing trend in massive popular protest at the time of the author's writing (during the demonstrations in Prague, September 2000); the author reflects on possible motivations for popular protest against the WTO, including the parody of international aid in the context of crippling debt amongst developing countries and the decline of living conditions amongst some developed countries where the capitalist agenda has transformed and degraded society.

In the main part of the book, 'The battle in Seattle: Its significance for education', Rikowski begins by considering 'the WTO's forays into education' in terms of policies and agreements established by the WTO and member states; the author also considers how education itself represents a threat to this advocate of corporate interest.
The first part of the book 'The World Trade Organisation and the battle in Seattle' provides an informative overview of the WTO and related economic structures following the end of the Second Wold War, setting the scene for a detailed explanation of the anti-capitalist and anti-globalisation movements that arose in response to the phenomenon of Globalisation; this historical prelude illustrates the cultural and political background to the protests at Seattle in 1999 and provides an informative précis on the main tenets of Globalisation.

In the second section 'The Significance of Seattle', the author summarises the motivations for protest at Seattle, including the origins of the anti-Globalisation movement as an essentially anti-capitalist phenomenon. Rikowski discusses the concerns of this movement including shifting economic prosperity in developed countries and the effects of WTO trade policies (citing Gleeson and Low, 1999/2000 that 'everything must

be sacrificed to the free market and the welfare of businesses'). The author considers interpretations of the Seattle protests by mainstream commentators and academics, particularly those that interpret the events as individualised protests on issues such as poverty, Third World debt or Globalisation (rather than a more fundamental protest against capitalism per se) - Rikowski contends that political awareness amongst the protestors was sufficient to indicate deeper understanding and opposition to the politics of capitalism. Issues of how to respond to Seattle and the possibilities for reform of the economic system are also discussed.

The third section of the book 'Seattle, the WTO and education' builds a case to support the direct link between the WTO agenda and education, citing a prominent corporate executive - 'Yes, globalisation is going to be over everything – education, health, communication, capital, knowledge… (Jacques Rogozinski 1999/2000). The influence of the WTO on educational policy is described as an integral part of the wider range of services targeted by the WTO. Rikowski describes how the Seattle protests disrupted agreements on the privatisation of key public services such as health and education when implementing the GATs agreement (General Agreement on Trade in Services) requiring WTO states to de-regulate public services and allow for private sector competition. Rikowski illustrates how public services have been targeted by business as a source of income following the decline of manufacturing in recent years; the ongoing process of public sector privatisation is described in terms of recent developments across Europe. A number of WTO reports are also discussed which further describe the role of education within the agenda of the CTS (Council for Trade in Services).

The last part of the book 'The significance of education for anti-capitalism' explores possibilities for the future, drawing on Marxist political and economic theory; Rikowski examines Marx's view of commodities and 'labour-power' as key components of our economic system, i.e. how economies are dependent on the capacity of individuals to perform labour in order to produce commodities. One key aspect for Rikowski is the development of skills; Rikowski describes how governments such as New Labour have developed a skills agenda (i.e. lifelong learning) to focus and accelerate the capabilities of individuals to become more efficient workers, effectively harnessing this labour-power in order to maintain and expand the economic system. Rikowski offers a critical perspective on this emerging agenda, questioning the ultimate value of the skills agenda for the state and individual. The author points out that there is no ceiling or point of satisfaction within this social model, i.e. that society is driven to increasingly higher goals and higher targets, not least in education. The role of educators and learners is considered in this context, where expectations become absurd in the light of constantly shifting performance targets.

The book concludes with considerations on the strategic importance of education in the production of labour-power and the importance of teachers in fostering an alternative approach to the current skills agenda, including the central role of critical pedagogy in challenging government advocacy.

On a personal note, I would highly recommend this book to anyone interested in the areas of globalisation, Marxism, trends in education or the future of public services generally. This book reveals that there is an urgent need for greater awareness amongst academics, educators and the general public of the threats to public services as a consequence of the GATs and other WTO agreements. If you have heard of terms such as Globalisation or anti-Capitalism, this book explains the origins and history of the international financial mechanisms that are becoming more powerful within world politics and within the daily lives of us all.

The New Rulers of the World, by John Pilger, Verso (London), 2002, 254pp, $CD21, ISBN 1 85984-412-X

Book review by Julian Samuel

John Pilger's *The New Rulers of the World* shows us how the rich-and-getting-exponentially richer are responsible for producing land dispossession, poverty, blindness, and death. We learn about the effects of recent imperialism such as the holocaust of communists and others in
Indonesia (1965-66); this particular slaughter was backed by many Western leaders including Prime Minister Harold Macmillian and John F. Kennedy who agreed to 'liquidate President Sukarno, depending on the situation and available opportunities.' pp. 30. (Our smiling Prime Minister, Jean Chrétien, in 1997, in front of TV cameras put his arms around Indonesia's
killer of millions - Suharto). Many politicians and corporations - Tony Blair is one of Pilger's central targets - are presented as killers who are really no different from Hitler. Blair approved "eleven arms deals with Indonesia under cover of the Official Secrets Acts and Cook's declaration
of an 'ethical' dimension to foreign policy." p. 23

This ethical dimension or understanding between western greed - embodied in corporations - and third world dictators is developed in four fast chapters: "The Modern Pupil"; "Paying the Price" "The Great Game." The final chapter, "The Chosen Ones" shows Australia's genocide against the
Aborigines. Pilger's Australia is incurably racist. The Aussie Olympic Co-ordination Authority used stellar sellouts to stay the charge of racism in the eyes of the world; the political elites continually use illegal land rights traps that have reduced many Aborigines to suicide. Many become blind: "...up to 80 per cent of Aboriginal children have potentially blinding trachoma because of untreated cataracts." pp. 169 Does one want to boycott Australia and Australian products after reading Pilger's book? Their prime minister, John Howard, has made the colour of one's skin a life and death issue.

As a Canadian, I am aware that we do not have a single journalist who is as courageous or as well-informed as Pilger. Canadian journalists exactly know how and why the Jewish State is killing Palestinians and snatching their land in the West Bank and Gaza but are either censored by editors

(especially at The Montreal Gazette) or self-censored. Pilger, however, is unequivocal: "We need an awareness of lethal double standards...while more than 400 UN resolutions calling for justice in Palestine are not worth the paper they are written on." pp. 11-12.

Michael Ignatieff, a Canadian who works in the human rights industry at Harvard, is "an enthusiastic backer of the West's invasions and bombing (as a way to 'feed the starving and enforce peace in the case of civil strive'), prefers 'liberal intervention'." pp. 161 Ignatieff is given full
access to the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

Pilger's inexorably attacks academics. I quote him at length on these high priests of silence: "Those with unprecedented resources to understand this, including many who teach and research in the great universities, suppress their knowledge publicly; perhaps never before has there been such a
silence." (pp. 3) and, "By keeping silent, they have allowed government to diminish a wealth of knowledge of how the world works, declaring it 'irrelevant' and withholding funding. This is not surprising when the humanities departments - the engine rooms of ideas and criticism - are
close to moribund. When academics suppress the voice of their knowledge, who can the public turn to? ... By never recognizing western state terrorism, their complicity is assured. To state this simple truth is deemed unscholarly; better say nothing (my emphasis). " pp. 163

Despite the useful lessons on western state terrorism and imperialism (Pilger uses 'imperialism' not 'globalization') a few questions persist. Is it fair of him to *not* point out how imperialism should be counter-attacked? He knows its weaknesses deeply. Why is he silent on how to actually *do* something to turn back the ravage of Africa, the Arab world Asia et al? Would a tax revolt be a relevant or useless strategy? It is clear that street protests accomplish nothing. What would he answer?

In Iraq, America's current-day Nazis as well as others are directly responsible for the current holocaust of about 6000 children a month (pp. 9). Let's put that figure in another context: A goateed cultural studies academic takes 20 minutes to read a paper on Inuit Hip Hop at an Queer Theory conference in Melbourne; by the time he finishes his presentation 2.6 Iraqi kids will have been killed. It takes approximately eight hours or 62.4 deaths to read "The New Rulers of the World".

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The Constant Gardener by John Le Carré
Published by Viking, 2000
$37.99, 509 pages

Book Review by Julian Samuel

John Le Carré's *The Constant Gardener* details, in minutiae, how British diplomats while away the hours in Africa. We meet the pharmaceutical giants and their kissing cousins: the Foreign Office, British Intelligence; scientists-with-objective-scientific-opinions-for-sale; Third World
dictators; UN-look-the-other-way-types; arms merchants wearing lacquered shoes, champagne flutes in hand; British Parliament; snowy Canadian Universities; whore journalists salivating for a story-with-photographs of a British blonde with a slashed throat. Drugs made by white men in white coats in labs are being tested on Africans. Drugs you wouldn't test on your sick dog. The tests on black people, "who are going to die anyway", help to perfect drugs for the Western markets.

The dramas rehearsed in *The Constant Gardener* are nothing new. For eons, the left-wing press has been humming with reports on pharma tests in the Third World. With the publication of this book, Le Carré becomes, very surprisingly, an anti-imperialist par excellence. It is open-minded of him to look at his own backyard, finally. Dr Noam Chomsky, Critic Supreme of The Western Press, move over.

Why do our national news (sic) papers -- The Globe and Mail, The National Post, Saturday Night, The Montreal Gazette et al., and our state-run CBC remain so silent on this pillage? Why can't they be as uncompromising as Robert Fisk is on the Middle East? Why does not our ideology-free literary hero Mordecai Richler write anything of this magnitude? Why do not Quebec film-makers like Pierre Falardeau (tsé-mon-pays) or culturalists like Robert Lepage ever create works which deal with these matters? Why do not journalists name names more often? Are they on Sleepomicine or are they simply scared?

Lawyers are the ultimate silencers. They silence the critics because silence means more profit for British diplomats, the Foreign Office, British Intelligence, dubious or sincere scientists, African dictators bursting with high cholesterol, well-dressed UN brats, august British Parliamentarians addicted to the truth or something near the truth, and the wretched arms merchants to whom the world truly belongs.

The Constant Gardener, with its deft ability to mock accents and voices and to reproduce mingled, angular personalities with quantum precision, is too little, too late. Who is going to stop the pharma circus now? Will Mr Le Carré stop them? Yes, of course.

Film-maker and writer Julian Samuel has made a four-hour documentary on Orientalism and has published a novel, Passage to Lahore, [De Lahore à Montréal]. You may contact him at jjsamuel@vif.com

White Teeth, by Zadie Smith, Hamish Hamilton, Published by the Penguin Group, Toronto, 2000 $24.99, 462 pages

Book Review by Julian Samuel

Zadie Smith's 'White Teeth' punctures the pus-filled world of the politically correct and the religious. She gives all the major religions and their thinner derivations a jolly good hiding, especially: The Church of Animal Rights Activists, Jehovah's Witnesses, and Islam -- which
understandably, she is petrified to mock comprehensively. Happily, however, she takes oblique pot-shots throughout.

Smith's publishers have pressed Salman Rushdie's seal of approval right smack in the middle of the cover: 'An astonishingly assured début, funny and serious .. it has bite.' The words 'Salman Rushdie,' in red ink, are set on a light cream-coloured box. Smith must have cringed at this
parentalism. Father Rushdie helps to sell the book. Smith has composed beautifully-argued pages on the Bradford Moslems who shower the rose petals of tolerance on copies of 'The Satanic Verses.'

'White Teeth' sails through generations in a now multi-racial Britain as they arrive, leave, come back, clash, merge and intercourse with working class whites, spatially disoriented hippies, scooter nerds, white middle-class English school kids with their well-syntaxed parental parents, and a luminary scientist who copyrights the genetic structure of a mouse. There is a hilarious, well-orchestrated section on why young black women get their curly black hair straightened; politically advanced lesbians laughing in the background.

Smith does not sustain entangled narratives well. Rather, her strength lies in replicating the English spoken in London. With formal expertise she places diverse vernaculars right beside the Queen's -- well, err... more or less somfing like the Queen's. Early Jamaican-English rhymes beside
clunky white working-class English; Modern Jamaican-English breathes against historical Jamaican-English with metallic urbanity. Two British Jamaican men prattle in old time Jamaican-English while sitting in O'Connell's pub; the pub owner prattling in an tragicomic working-class Queen's which is more of a knife blade than a ductile tongue.

Sadly, this novel-of-lesser-ideas moves with little consequential cultural or political depth. (Iain Pears', 'An Instance of the Finger Post,' is a more challenging novel of historical, political, and scientific ideas, with substantial characters set in calculated, sinuous plots. But then Pears may
not have Smith's comic ability to use Modern 'black' English with similar dexterity.)

Smith's sprawling narratives about fathers, mothers, daughters, sons, brothers and the throbbing adolescent tensions are not set in challenging frameworks. She doesn't 'flash it', as Jamaican-English might have it. One wishes that she had threshed out a more jarring

story path. Why? Because Smith is recording cultural life on this European island as it traverses its most radical cultural transformation to date, Roman conquest of 55 BC notwithstanding. The UK of 'White Teeth' was not visible a mere twenty or thirty years ago. Imagine a Fatwa at the time of 'Strawberry Fields'; imagine Gerry and the Pace Makers singing in Urdu (now a national
language); much easier to imagine someone copyrighting a mouse's genes at the time of 'Steptoe and Son', though it was still out of the reach of science back then.

The subject matter of her book somehow warrants, or tends to ask, for a hitherto unseen narrative structure. But Smith -- perhaps sensibly, for so much of experimentalism is deathly stupid and uglily formal -- sticks to conventional narrative form, loving nods to Joyce, the lapsed Catholic. One smooth, formally conservative chapter flows beautifully into another. London emerges out of the Roman fog anew, turgid with postcolonial hybridity and rampant with religious superstitions and corollary violence.

Many writers in Europe's most prestigious island (and on the continental mainland itself) have, with tremendous creativity, already confronted the question of complexly-coded multi-racial societies. Amin Maalouf's masterpiece, 'Leon L'African' (1986) comes to mind as well as, Mehdi
Charef's 'Le thé au harem d`Archimède' (1985).

'White Teeth' refines the tradition of unearthing what would have without doubt been passed over by the British publishing industry and its indulgent nombrilist narratives. There is nothing new or shocking about 'White Teeth,' but what a pleasure it is to experience Zadie Smith's mastery of
European tongues flapping in front of the Queen Mom copyright mouse squeaking and all. Dying to see the film.

When We Were Orphans, by Kazuo Ishiguro
Alfred A. Knoff Canada, Toronto, 2000
$34.95, 313 pages

Book Review by Julian Samuel

Kazuo Ishiguro's 'When We Were Orphans' is written in a prose that falls like fine rain on a sunny day, glistening on the Lake District, the moor, Shanghai, on Japanese soldiers. The story captures English society of the 30's. Ishiguro is good at setting tactical conversations amidst large, festive, bourgeois balls, chandelier and glitter.

The splintered historical narrative has a faint hint of Excavating The Political. References to English Fabians with their righteous fight against the injection of Indian opium into China, and a young detective looking for his parents are the main themes.

Ishiguro's characters should have been better integrated into the Chinese history; this would have deepened our understanding of the political use of opium. *When We Were*

Orphans tells us more about the individual as a personality, rather than the individual moving through-and-in-history.
Despite this imbalance, the book is a lovely, almost satisfactory read.

Experience, by Martin Amis
Alfred A. Knoff Canada, Toronto, 2000
$35.95, 406 pages

Book Review by Julian Samuel

Martin Amis' 'Experience' bursts with terrific multi-layered writing and millions of half-page long footnotes which prove his passionate love and knowledge of English literature, but the book is as inane as a Tony Blair smile. Why not compose a book consisting entirely of footnotes? See what I
mean about experimental dullness?

'Experience' is English navel gazing. After getting as far as page 175, I returned to 'White Teeth' and listened to the many tongues around Kilburn, Willesden, and Primrose Hill.

Film-maker and writer Julian Samuel, has made a four-hour documentary on Orientalism and has published a novel, Passage to Lahore (De Lahore à Montréal). You may contact him at jjsamuel@vif.com

The Fact of Blackness: Frantz Fanon and Visual Representation
Edited byAlan Read. Institute of Contemporary Arts, London,
Bay Press, Seattle, 1996

(Contributors to the book: Homi K Bhabha, Bell Hooks, Stuart Hall, Lola Young, Kobena Mercer, Françoise Vergès, Renée Green, Isaac Julien, Raoul Peck, Marc Latamie, Lyle Ashton Harris, Ntozake Shange, Mark Nash, Martine Attille, and Steve McQueen.)

Book Review by Julian J. Samuel – 'Ignoring the role of violence in Fanon: playing with the bones of an exhumed hero'

Frantz Fanon was born in Martinique in 1925, studied psychiatry in France, went to Algeria to head a hospital at Blida where he joined the struggle for Algerian liberation. He wrote about colonialism and the struggle against it from a point of view that tried to understand violence and its role in de-colonialization. Fanon died in 1961 at the age of 36. Many Third World political and intellectual leaders have studied *The Wretched of the Earth,* which has been translated into many languages including Urdu, (now a native language of England); and, into Farsi, by Dr. Ali Shari'ati, a major influence on the Iranian revolution of 1979.

"To wreck the colonial world is henceforth a mental picture of action which is very clear, very easy to understand and which may be assumed by each one of the individuals which constitute the colonized people." (The Wretched of the Earth, Grove Press Edition, 1963 pp.40-41)

"...colonialism is not a thinking machine, nor a body endowed with reasoning faculties. It is violence in its natural state, and it will only yield when confronted with greater violence."
(The Wretched of the Earth, p. 61)

Algeria's resistance to external and internal imperialism persists decade after decade. When did it all start? Did it start with the surrender of Abd-el-Kadar in 1847? Or with French orchestrated massacre at Setif in1945, when according to President Bourguiba of Tunisia, upwards of 45,000 people were killed? Or does it start with the war of liberation itself (1954-62), in which one million Algerians were killed, and an additional 3000 politically related deaths ensued in metropolitan France?

Fanon's acts are inseparable from the Algerian war against the French. So, does a possible '90s interpretation of Fanon's thinking start with Alan Read's book? No. Why? Because most of its contributors put profound emphasis on dull '80s style sexual politics seen through Fanon's thrilling and naïve 'Black Skin White Masks,' (1952).

The professors and artists in this book are benightedly disconnected from the many guerrilla movements transpiring throughout the world. Read's contributors do not discuss the tactical violence that the Front de Libération Nationale (F.L.N.) offered French civility. Alan Read keeps the issue of armed struggle out of a study of Fanon. It is impossible to discuss Fanon without discussing the many violence-laden Algerias today, and to read Fanon in terms of the mere sexual-political trend is futile.

The Fact of Blackness records a dialogue that took place at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London via an exhibition: 'Mirage: Enigmas of Race, Difference and Desire,' -- preceded by a conference: "Working with Fanon: Contemporary Politics and Cultural Reflection' (1995). The conference was sponsored by Toshiba.

Read's effort consists of the work of university professors, some visual artists and filmmakers who have made career improvements by injecting their work with the glorious auras of political activism via a "re-thinking" of the earlier Fanon. When reading the book I wonder whether these anti-colonialists are doing nothing but maintaining the status quo. Do they offer anything on the many imperialist machines ravaging the Third World? No. Do they show any interest in front-line struggles within the West (IRA), or, for example, in Latin America (MRTA)? No, not at all. Instead, I hear them whispering: I am stuck in a dreamy utopian class-struggle oriented Marxism without the requisite gay and lesbian 'activism'. They just offer uglily written "Theory."

A short note on the current state of cultural studies is appropriate. The emptying of the activist politics from Fanon's works means, of course, that there will be plenty of

"committed" yet sloppy thinking. Much of cultural studies is complacent, and careless, these days. Read's work reminds me of the recent Sokal affair. A physics professor at NYU submitted a bogus cultural studies style essay to Social Text, a leading journal in that field. Sokal was trying to prove that cultural studies professors have not any rigour.

Andrew Ross and the editors of the journal rushed to publish the essay: they were now going to have a physicist "doing" cultural studies in their pages. This would make them look cutting-edge. As soon as his paper was published, Professor Sokal publicly exposed the whole set-up. [For an exhilarating discussion of the inherent and utter falsity of cultural studies postmodernists, please see Paul Boghossian's comment in the 13 December, 1996 issue of the Times Literary Supplement].

Read's collection is a clear example of hazy and complacent "Theory" that so resembles the Sokal set-up. Stuart Hall, the king of cultural studies in the United Kingdom, who does not make the same Rolls-Royce-level salary as his anti-colonialist counter parts in America, writes so "Theoretically" that the word, incomprehension, does not describe the experience of "Reading" him. With clockwork regularity he gives nods of approval to the beacons of Eurocivility: Hegel, Freud, Lacan, Foucault, and the requisite others are noted, and foot-noted, incessantly. I presume, he thinks that these European intellectuals are crucial to political action. Hall's introductory essay gives the impression of someone who is willing to use philosophical references to impress the naive. Action is what counts. Otherwise, why study Fanon? Why not just study Baudrillard and fall fast asleep? With unbridled erudition Hall informs us:

> "Let us put it simplistically ...For, if this text is 'where Lacan makes his interruption into colonial discourse theory', as Gates asserts, it is also where Fanon 'reads' Lacan in the light of his own preoccupations. In the long footnote on the 'mirror phase', it is Fanon's appropriation of Lacan which strikes us most vividly. First, the 'Other' in this transaction in raced: ('...the real Other for the white man is and will continue to be the black man. And conversely'). It is difficult not to agree that he writes here as if 'the real Other' is indeed 'a fixed phenomenological point'." pp. 26

Fortunately, this swishy stylistic complexity is far outdone by Homi Bhabha, who sometimes does do good work, I think. However, in Read's book, Bhabha constructs sentences that are so magnificent that one has to appreciate them as ink marks on the page, as a kind of finger painting in minutiae. Listen to this unadulterated Gayatri-Chakravorty-Spivakese:

> "Fanonian 'continuance' is the temporality of the practice of action: its performativity or agency is constituted by its emphasis on the singularity of the 'local': an iterative structuring of the historical event and political pedagogy and an ethical sense constructed from truths that are partial, limited, unstable. Fanon's dialectic of the everyday is, most significantly, the emergency of a new historical and theoretical temporality generated by the process of revolutionary transience and transformation." pp. 190

Bhabha implies that complex-sounding prose is needed to interpret and understand Fanon. Clarity, brevity, and historical analysis are not needed

This book is born of a massive pre-Oedipal-post-Foucaultian-pre-Hegelian-Electra-inferiority-complex in the contributor's attempts to out do the colonial masters at the game of words, and not at the game of gaining political ground. Western "radicals," argues Michael Neumann in 'What's Left: Radical Politics and the Radical Psyche,' (1988) are addicted to "Theory" and not to political success. To actually engage in projects that make political gains is a fate worse than death.

Read's contributors offer attacks on Fanon's correctable homophobia, misogyny, and sexism. Moreover, these charges are made without fair reference to historical context, and are amplified to drown out Fanon's understanding of violence. Violence is the only thing the masters listen to. Nothing else. But political violence may not be a good companion to cultural and sexual politics; indeed, it may be bad to support it when trying to become a tenured high priest of cultural studies.

Here is the thinking of the completely delirious American bell hooks -- another super-salaried anti-colonialist:

> "In love. I was thinking a lot about the place of empathy in any kind of ethic of care and the notion that part of how one embraces that larger you - that you that Fanon uses - is through the capacity to embrace the other in some way. What does it mean if Fanon is unable to embrace the black female -- what part of himself remains unembraced? How does the possibility of love or an ethic of care chart the path to this humanism that he poses as redemptive?" pp. 106

Are these consequential and serious psychological insights? Is there anything at all to be gained from "thinking" about bell hook's words? No. (This passage reminds me of the smell of an epoch when people used to smear on patchouli oil). Need one really embrace questions of academic freedom of speech and tenure? These passages offer sufficient proof that activists who have anything contestory to say are not permitted anywhere near the university or art institutions. Tenure protects complacent luminaries.

Read's book is a quintessential dead end. There is no human liberation here. It begins where Fanon began, not where Fanon left off. It is boring to see sloppy professors and artists toying with Fanon's bones in the old-fashioned world of sexual politics, and in the wordy flatulence of "Theory" devoted to more "Theory" and to more "Theory".

Julian J. Samuel has published 'Passage to Lahore' (1995), ['De Lahore à Montréal' (1996)]; and has made a documentary Orientalism: 'The Raft of the Medusa: Five voice on colonies, nations and histories,' 'Into the EuropeanMirror,' 'City of the Dead and the World Exhibitions' (1993-95).

Fanon for Beginners, written and illustrated by Deborah Wyrick, Writer and Readers Publishing, Inc. New York, 1998, 188 pages, $15.95

Book Review by Julian J. Samuel

In the current age of "Cultural Studies," "Postcolonial Studies," and "Postmodernism," when preference is given to incoherent writing and thinking, Dr Wyrick's *Fanon for Beginner's* is a lighthouse in a sea of self-promoting nonsense. She clearly introduces Frantz Fanon's rich understanding of the psychosis of colonized people and colonizers to anyone no matter what their educational background happens to be; readers with just high school diplomas to the loftiest of logicians will learn something from this book. And her illustrations are cheekier than the Gazette's Aislin. They are twisted, hilarious, vaguely recalling the images of James Ensor and the wry wit of cartoonist Ralph Steadman. Has Fanon's influence waned since his death thirty-seven years ago? No. His books are used throughout not only the Third World, but by many institutions of higher learning in America and Europe. Third World leaders of liberation movements, and most Québec's separatists (some of whom ought to re-read Fanon's views on racism) are familiar with his ideas. Fanon was born in Martinique in 1925, studied psychiatry in France, went to Algeria to head a hospital at Blida where he joined the struggle for Algerian liberation (1954-62). In 'The Wretched of the Earth,' he exposes the violence of the colonialist and sides with the counter-violence of its victims.

This work has been translated into 25 languages including Urdu, (now a native language of England); and, into Farsi, by Dr. Ali Shari'ati, a major influence on the Iranian revolution of 1979. Fanon died in 1961.Wyrick's book leads to a deeper understanding of popular culture, geopolitics, the psychological basis of racism, colonialism and is free of sleazy political correctitude. Fanon's thinking on homosexuality et cetera is dated, those easily wounded should read 'Foucault for Beginners' instead. However, Fanon does explain the radical participation of Algerian women in their war against France with rigour and elegance. Wyrick traces Fanon's development through his books. 'Black Skin, White Masks,' (1952), details sex and politics: "When my restless hands caress those white breasts, they grasp white civilization and dignity and make them mine." (black skin white masks, 63) And fear: "The Negro is an animal, the Negro is bad, the Negro is mean, the Negro is ugly...The Nigger is shivering with cold, that cold goes through your bones, the handsome little boy is trembling because he thinks that the Nigger is quivering with rage, the little white boy throws himself into this mother's arms. Mama, the nigger is going to eat me up." (bs 113-14)

In 'A Dying Colonialism' (1970) Fanon devotes many pages to the veil and its political importance:

> "For the tourist and the foreigner, the veil demarcates both Algerian society and its feminine counterpart." (a dying colonialism, 35-36 {l'an cinq de la rev algerienne)

Here Wyrick offers us the complexity of the role of the veil in the Algerian revolution: "...European bosses tried to reacculturate their male Algerian employees, demanding that they bring their wives to company functions. Algerian men were caught in a double bind: if they agreed, they violated cultural prohibitions against women being on display; if they refused, they risked losing their jobs."

She shows how Fanon looks at this question from many points of view; he says:

> "The rape of the Algerian woman in the dream of a European...is always preceded by a rending of the veil." (dc 45)

Wyrick does not show whether Fanon saw the few so-called modernizing effects of colonialism: what for example was the position of the average colonialist regime on clitoridectomy? When discussing 'The Wretched of the Earth' (1963), Wyrick deals with Fanon's controversial views of anti-colonial violence by showing the very concrete link between the devouring colonizer and the terror he imposes.

Conservative commentators on Fanon have intentionally deformed his reading of counter-violence. The Globe and Mail's Robert Fulford recently wrote this about Fanon: "God knows how many deaths his madness helped justify." (22 April, 1998). Fulford, in his youth, may have fallen under the influence of Time Magazine: "Fanon ... an apostle of violence...a prisoner of hate..." (April, 1965).

Fanon's words are:

> "The practice of violence binds [colonized people] together as a whole, since each individual forms a violent link in great chain, a part of the great organism of violence which has surged upward in reaction to the settler's violence in the beginning..." (the wretched of the earth, 93)

Richard Nixon, George Bush, Saddam Hussein and Benazir Bhutto are not scented replicas of Florence Nightingale. Would it not be naive to expect Third World populations to lie down and hand over raw materials, oil, postcolonial sex tourism, and cheaply made running shoes free of charge?

"Fanon for Beginners" could be terrifically useful: think of all the dinner parties you've gone to where you have felt inadequately informed on the colonised world. Reading this book will get you solidly grounded in these matters, and you will be able--if you feel like it--to use verbal violence against people whose arguments you've found inadequate, smug or mildly schizophrenic.

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FILM REVIEWS

Shooting Imperialism: Three Documentaries by Julian Samuel
by Cecilia Morgan

**An review article of Julian Samuel's 3 documentary films - The Raft of the Medusa:
Five Voices on Colonies, Nations and Histories (1993, 99 minutes), Into the
European Mirror (1994, 56 minutes) and City of the Dead and the World
Exhibitions (1995, 76 minutes)**

In the recent past much has been written about colonialism, imperialism and
postcolonialism. Inside the academy, a number of scholars have explored the complex
relations of power, exploitation and dominance, as well as the related issues of longing,
fantasy, and desire for the 'other,' that fuelled the expansion of European colonization
into the Americas, Africa, and Asia. As well as seeking to understand the role played by
'conquerors,' this scholarship has also drawn our attention to the roles of indigenous
peoples in colonial projects: their resistance, complicity, and negotiation of structures
both material and discursive and the effects of imperialism on their societies. Postcolonial
theory has played no small role in revitalizing an area previously devoted to
discussions of imperial political strategy and decisions undertaken at the 'centre'; in fact,
much recent work has challenged scholars to re-consider their notions of 'margin' and
'centre.' Some of this research has also found its way into undergraduate and graduate
curricula, being deployed as world history courses or as courses that focus on various
imperialisms.

In this proliferation of print on the topic, Julian Samuel's work challenges us to consider
the possibilities and limitations of the place of film as a medium to explore these issues.
As an historian who, by training and by practice, has spent much of her time dealing with
written texts, I was curious to see how documentary film might deal with the histories of
colonialism and imperialism. What, I wondered, were the possibilities offered by film
and what were the limitations? How might the medium of film, with its ability to shift
the viewer from one speaker, topic, and national boundary to another by juxtaposition or
rapid movement - not to mention its use of visual material - alter or challenge our ability
to explore these histories? And what place, I wondered, might these films have for
classroom use?

Samuel, a self-described Christian-Pakestani-Québeçois-Montrealer, has produced these
films and has also published a number of books on these and related topics. The three
documentaries reviewed here are generally about Islam and its relationship to the West,
although other kinds of colonial relationships and contexts are also discussed: central
Africa, Hong Kong, the Caribbean, and India. All three feature a cast of commentators
who have either written about and, in many cases, directly experienced
colonial/postcolonial conditions in these contexts. While there are multiple overlapping

themes treated by these films (they are, after all, meant to be a trilogy), each one has a slightly different focus. The *Raft of the Medusa* looks at the development of the 'Orient' by the West as an historical category and strategy for viewing and producing knowledge about Islamic countries. Throughout his treatment of this theme Samuel intersperses interviews with Marlene Nourbese Philips on black history, both African and Caribbean; with Sara Suleri on the 1947 partition of India and Pakistan and Indian independence; and with Ackbar Abbas on the colonial/postcolonial status of Hong Kong. In *Into the European Mirror*, much of which was shot at the Alhambra, Samuel continues these themes but shifts his focus to examine the notion of 'borders' and their establishment by nation-states, using Spain's late fifteenth-century symbolic and literal expulsion of its Muslim and Jewish populations, and Palestine in the twentieth century, as examples of such processes. The third film, *City of the Dead and the World Exhibitions*, takes the viewer to Cairo where a range of topics past and present are discussed: gender distinctions and architecture, the imperialist projects of world exhibitions and their role in shaping the 'Orient' for the West, the growth of Islamic religious fundamentalism, and the role of the Egyptian state.

Samuel uses a montage of interviews through much of the films, moving back and forth between the various interviewees. At times - but only occasionally - the viewer is made aware of his presence. There is, though, always an implicit dialogue between his subjects, whether they hold similar or different perspectives on the same subject. And, lest this use of 'talking heads' may sound somewhat dull, I would argue that it is anything but that. For one, Samuel's subjects are extremely articulate and passionate about their topics, whether they are addressing the machinations of Egyptian governments or the West's excision of Islam from its historical memory. As well, the films are visually arresting, as Samuel makes extensive use of techniques such as split screens (with a small, framed 'head' in one corner surrounded by a larger image), particular settings (such as the Alhambra or the Pyramids), or various kinds of montages that expand, contract, and disappear. Samuel draws upon the wealth of images that have been and continue to be produced by imperialism: Cairo's architecture; documentary footage of imperial spectacles; and the silks and other luxury items consumed in Hong Kong's luxury boutiques (the boutiques themselves also feature as spectacle of consumption).

Furthermore, the paintings used by Samuel to frame much of his work – many of them taken from nineteenth-century 'Orientalist' painters – also point to the sheer excesses of imperialist imagery, the proliferation of such visual materials in the West, over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The constant flow of these images, the fact that they are so very conspicuous and figure so prominently in the films, is a device that also underscores their power. Paintings of odalisques or shots of the so-called 'Islamic city' are not simply visually arresting backdrops to the interviews: to paraphrase Edward Said, they have been the texts into which geopolitical awareness has been distributed. There are many themes that unite this trilogy, although each film has a slightly different emphasis. One of the most compelling - and one that is clearly stated in Raft and Into the European Mirror - is that of the dominance of Eurocentric historical narratives, particularly vis-à-vis Islam. A particular and pernicious historical teleology and amnesia, many of these commentators argue, has shaped Western history. Western

memory has failed in a number of ways, we are told, as its focus and periodization have been shaped not by purely 'scholarly' academic practice but rather by the epistemological work of imperialism. Conventional narratives that privilege the Renaissance by seeing it as the emergence from 'darkness' into 'light' do great damage to the history of Islam and the Arab world, as the centuries known to the West as medieval' were, in fact, ones of significant scientific and cultural developments in Islamic societies. The West's definition of modernity, too, has not only excluded the East, it has also depended on notions of the East as existing outside the temporality of 'modern times.' As the interviews conducted with Thierry Hentsch at the Alhambra point out, the very notion of 'historical time' is a conflicted and power-laden one. This is not a new insight - feminist scholars, for one, have been making this argument for some time - but it is one worth repeating, particularly in the classroom.

Samuel's interview of architectural scholar Janet Abu-Lughod was, for me, extremely illuminating. Abu-Lughod's work examines the architecture of cities in Algeria, Morocco, and Egypt, cities that have often been a favourite Western trope for knowledge about 'Middle Eastern' societies, a trope in which architectural design (the use of walled courtyards, for example) has been linked to the sequestration of women. During the course of her research, she began to realize that the descriptions of 'Islamic' cities she was using were generalizations of only two or three cities that had undergone French occupation; the French had constructed them according to their notions of a 'medieval Orient.' Walled cities such as Medina, in which the 'native' population dwelled (a popular image in both novels and movies), were in fact a creation of the colonial power, material testament to its desire to demarcate the boundaries between 'West' and 'East;' they were not, as has been argued, a sign of respect for Muslim culture and social organization. Not only were French residents banned from living in the Muslim quarters, Abu-Lughod points out that the fortified walls surrounding these areas could be used to contain the indigenous population living within them.

The documentaries also seek to explore not just the 'construction' of an imagined and fantasy-ridden 'Orient' but they also seek to reverse these mirror images of East and explore what the 'West' meant to it. For many - albeit not all - of Samuel's interviewees, the coming of the Western colonialism meant a violent rupture with rich and complex pasts; simultaneously, other kinds of narratives were created that, as we have seen, posed significant cultural, social, economic, and political problems for colonized countries. Those who spoke of borders and frontiers argue that there are no - nor were there ever - 'natural' frontiers or nations: rather, what we have been left with are the legacies of imperial relations and the power struggles embedded within them, whether we speak of fifteenth-century Spain or 1990s Bosnia. But some of the interviewees also speak of the permeability of national borders that, despite official attempts to make inviolable, increasingly escape the nation-state's control. Such a point is, I think, best personified in the testimony of Medicins Sans Frontiers doctor Chris Giannou. As he moves from one war zone to another, from Beirut to Somalia, Cambodia, and Bosnia, Giannou (who himself has taken numerous physical risks) points out that certain commodities and ideologies - drugs, arms, and religious doctrines – are no respector of such boundaries. Such properties circulate from one country to another, often without ideological

restraints, creating unimaginable havoc and horror in the process. In the late twentieth century, Giannou argues, 'frontiers' in many contexts have become opportunities for arms bazaars. But Giannou also describes the 'moral frontier' that he himself cannot leave and that he has seen exemplified in the many refugee camps in which he has worked. This frontier of human dignity, he argues, was demonstrated in the Palestinian camp of Shatila by Christians, Muslims, and Lebanese. It is one that transcends nation and religion and allows human beings to overcome starvation, bombardment, and brutality.

These documentaries, though, offer no comfort for those who want uncomplicated or seamless narratives of imperialism. Many of Samuel's interviewees insist that we cannot replace the Western metanarratives of the past with new ones that rely on the trope of pristine indigenous cultures being irrevocably corrupted by 'evil empires.' Subaltern nationalisms themselves have often been initiated by imperialist structures and are thus, it is argued, to some degree implicated and embedded in imperialism. The 1857 Indian Mutiny, Sara Suleri argues in Raft, sparked Indian nationalism and in her eyes, India's nineteenth-century colonial experiences were thus automatically modernizing. In the same documentary, Ackbar Abbas points out that the case of Hong Kong confounds our paradigms of imperialist expansion and indigenous peoples' suppression. Hong Kong, he argues, was not a 'nation' prior to the British arrival; there is no 'history' of Hong Kong as a separate entity, only barren rock overlaid with the residue of colonialism. Therefore, according to Abbas, there can be no position outside 'colonialism,' only resistance from the inside. And, while Hong Kong will pass from one imperial power to another and thus be politically subordinate, it has already achieved superiority over China in technology and communications and therefore inhabits two different periods simultaneously. Unlike India in 1947, a 'post-colonial' situation has been attained without decolonization and in fact precedes a new period of colonialism; this is a narrative that has, in Ackbar's words, been 'garbled.' The advanced state of Hong Kong's economy means that a subaltern model such as India's will simply not fit: historical specificity must be substituted for totalizing theory.

Samuel's interviewees also remind us that we need to move beyond the binaries of West and 'Other' in seeking to both understand and dismantle imperialist projects. While beginning with the framework of 'West' and 'Orient' set out by Said, *Raft of the Medusa*, in particular, also attempts to dismantle these categories. Suleri points to the 'anxiety' of the colonizer for whom the material benefits of imperialism were juxtaposed against the psychic costs. Her particular example is that of Rudyard Kipling: born in Lahore, his first language was Hindi and his primary adult contact was with his Indian ayah. Kipling's removal to an English boarding school, Suleri argues, was a trauma from which he, like so many other Anglo-Indian children, did not recover. To Kipling and his peers India, not Britain, was 'home.' Suleri urges us to renounce the rhetoric of us and them, calling it a dangerous way of maintaining binaries. She also argues that we move away from biologically-inflected ways of seeing race, gender, and cultural differences, a strategy that includes abandoning notions of 'appropriation of voice.' But for Suleri multiculturalism is not the answer, as she believes this position simply reinforces rigid dichotomies: it is both the commonality of human experiences and the differences created by human cultures that should inform our inquiries.

Nourbese Philips follows Suleri with the observation that, notwithstanding David Livingstone's role in imperialism in Africa, Livingstone occupied a more complex position than simply that of the 'white European/British male.' He came from a poor Scottish background (an observation that reminds us of the need to consider the specifics of colonizers' backgrounds) and Livingstone often preferred the company of Africans to that of his peers - albeit that of Africans with little European contact.

In discussing Salman Rushdie, Amin Maalouf speaks of the need for multiple identities: 'I think that exclusive belongings are a terrible thing and I refuse them.' Near the end of Raft, Maalouf declares that 'l'centre, c'est 'homme' who has the right to borrow from all religions, beliefs, and nations. 'I refuse to belong to any nation, but I respect those who claim multiple nations . . . and this is the future.'

Samuel also engages with the issue of religion, both religion as Christian misapprehensions of Islam but also as the complicated relations of Islam and Judaism, both to Christianity and to each other. *Into the European Mirror* in particular has much to say about the intertwining of religion and imperialism. Not only did Spanish Catholicism, according to Thierry Hentsch, expel both the 'real bodies' of first Jews and then Muslims after seven centuries of peaceful co-existence, the dominant narratives of European history subsequently expelled them from its purview. Both literally and symbolically, then, these 'Others' were deemed unnecessary to Spain which reconstituted itself as a nation of singular religious identity, a homogenous state that, as it 'cleansed' itself and reified its own borders, was also embarking upon imperial expansion overseas. Four centuries later, these 'Others' reappear in a rather different relationship, one still inflected by imperialism but because of historical contingencies configured in a different manner. The construction of a Jewish state in Palestine, according to Hentsch, also depended upon European powers' exclusion of Arabs from that state's very definition. In his 1919 letter to British Opposition leader David Lloyd George, Arthur Balfour admitted that Arabs would be left out of Palestine; however, such an exclusion was justifiable because of Europeans' historical tie to Judaism and 'this part of the world.' Europeans thus felt justified in this imperial project because, in Hentsch's view, they recognized themselves in it through the Bible - not because they recognized the rights of Jews to a home-land. Giannou also argues that a mixture of European culpability and guilt helped found the state of Israel. Having refused to save Jews from the Nazis in the 1930s and during the Second World War, European powers attempted to redeem themselves by creating a Jewish state and, in the process, also made the Palestinians the victims of victims, a scapegoat onto whose shoulders European anti-Semitism could be displaced. Yet another arena of religion and the state is addressed in *City of the Dead*, with its explicit discussion of the roles of the Egyptian and Algerian governments in creating a 'fundamentalist' crisis by their manipulations of their respective publics.

Samuel also links aspects of culture - language, symbol, image, metaphor, and narrative - to the material aspects of imperial expansion and resistance (although he is less interested in tracing the economic roots of colonialism). The two are intertwined in a number of ways. Chris Giannou, for example, feels that his own body has been an allegory,

mirroring the 'pathologies' of the societies in which he has worked. In Cambodia Giannou and his colleagues performed numerous amputations on villagers blown apart by land mines, operations led by 'foreign doctors' since the senior ranks of the medical profession had been decimated by the Khmer Rouge. Giannou thus sees a parallel between the maiming of his patients and Pol Pot's own 'amputation' of Cambodian society. As well, Samuel's cinematic effects (his use of documentary footage of French police executing Algerian nationalists during the 1950s, for example, that underlies one of his interviews) reminds us that constructing and disciplining the 'Other' has been bound up with deportations, executions, and massacres. The '"planned epistemic violence"' of imperialism was also 'backed up by the planned institutional violence of armies and law courts, prisons and state machinery.'

Yet cultural symbolism and imagery are important not only for their ability to illuminate power relations: they can also be used to explore cultural differences. In addition to Abu-Lughod's work on colonial architecture, the documentaries (particularly Into the European Mirror) examine religious distinctions as expressed in architectural structures. A number of Samuel's interviewees argue that Christianity (specifically Catholicism) and Islam have organized their spaces of worship quite differently, especially their use of light. In European cathedrals of the Middle Ages, light was deployed in a very directed and deliberate manner, designed to penetrate into otherwise dark and gloomy interiors as piercing shafts from above. In the Arab world, though, light is used to illuminate the entire courtyard of the mosque and to encompass all worshippers; the sky is an integral part of the religious structure. Moreover, by setting discussions of the historical expulsion of Islam from the West in the Alhambra, Samuel reinforces not just the liminality of that particular spot but also, I believe, asks us to rethink our notions of how we recognize claims of ownership of locations, texts, and people by either 'East' or 'West.
Much of what is discussed in these documentaries will not, of course, be entirely new - at least in its theoretical and conceptual forms – to scholars of colonial histories or postcolonial theories. And those historians who work in the fields covered by these films may disagree with the specificities of the arguments made in these documentaries. Yet the format in which these ideas are presented is a particularly compelling and intriguing one. Film allows a constant mingling of past and present, a shifting of these boundaries that is often difficult to achieve in print. While some might find this undermining of the historian's carefully-guarded temporal boundaries a problem, it strikes me that, particularly for teaching, it is a salutary reminder that we cannot consider imperialism as a completed project. In that respect, too, I think these documentaries (in particular Raft of the Medusa) could be of great help in introducing students to these issues, particularly since each one stands well on its own. Samuel's work could also help facilitate discussions of how we might conceive and teach beyond the nation-state, an issue recently raised by Victoria Heftler in the pages of this journal, since he is interested in exploring not just differences between East and West but also the connections that bind the two and the attempts of those who guard national borders to deny these links.

Perhaps the one and, to my mind, glaring absence from these documentaries is that of gender as an analytic category and a set of relations that both shaped and was shaped by imperialism. Although we hear about colonial architecture and gender relations in North

Africa, and gender relations are implicit in much of Samuel's visual materials (the masculinist military power of the state, or the figures of 'Oriental' women in the paintings), the interviews tell us little - at least explicitly – about the different impact of imperialism on colonized men and women, or the recurrence of gendered imagery and symbolism in both imperial and subaltern discourses. The inattention to gender is particularly striking in discussions of modernity, since over the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the 'veiled woman' has been a recurring trope for 'Eastern backwardness' in comparison to Western modernity. Moreover, although I realize that this is not Samuel's project, I suggest that, just as we cannot generalize about 'the East,' nor should we be too hasty to create a monolithic 'West' since in these documentaries the 'West' is so often really Europe; North and South America, with their own (and also highly differentiated) trajectories of imperialism are absent.

That being said, though, Samuel brings considerable skill, creativity, and political acuity to this area of historical research. These films not only remind us that their themes are by no means 'over and done with' but they also suggest new ways of imagining - despite the difficulties involved - a more truly 'postcolonial' future.

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ENDNOTES

1. See, for example, Monica M. van Beusekom and Ian Christopher Fletcher, Mansour Bonakdarian, Alice Conklin, and Douglas M. Peers, 'Teaching Radical History: Empire and Encounters III,' Radical History Review 71 (Spring 1988): 133-81.

2. For this description of Samuel, see Elaine Kalman Naves, 'Gadfly on our body politic, Montreal Gazette, July 5, 1997 (a review of Samuel's Passage to Lahore [Mercury Press, 1995], n.p.).

3. The interviewees for Raft are Marlene Nourbese Philips, Amin Maalouf, ThierryHentsch, Sara Suleri, Ackbar Abbas; for Into the European Mirror Homi Bhabha, Chris Giannou, Hentsch, and Rana Kabbani; and for City of the Dead Janet Abu-Lughod, Akbar S. Ahmad, Hussein Ahmed Amin, Edwar Al-Kharrat, Max Rodenbeck, and Timothy Mitchell.

4. Edward Said, Orientalism (Pantheon, 1978), 3

5. The documentary was made prior to the British departure from Hong Kong.

6. Anne McClintock, Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest (Routledge, 1995), 16.

7. Victoria Heftler, 'The Future of the Subaltern Past: Toward a Cosmopolitan "History from Below,"' left history 5, 1 (Spring 1997): 65-84.

8. The literature on gender and imperialism is quite large but see McClintock, Imperial Leather; also Reina Lewis, Gendering Orientalism: race, femininity, and representation (Routledge, 1996); and Ruth Roach Pierson and Nupur Chaudhuri, with the assistance of Beth McAuley, Nation, Empire, Colony: Historicizing Gender and Race (Indiana University Press, 1998)

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Bowling for Columbine, USA, 2002, 125 minutes.
Directed by Michael Moore

Film review by Julian Samuel

The United States National Security Entry Exit Registration System (NSEERS) will photograph and fingerprint Canadian citizens when they try to enter the United States. This rule applies if the Canadian in question was born in Iran, Iraq, Libya, Sudan, Syria, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, or Yemen. Is America re-emerging as an apartheid state in which there is one rule for whites, another rule non-whites? Given this current political climate in America, "Bowling for Columbine" is an important, progressive film. I highly recommend it. Moore, who recently authored a book called *Stupid White Men,* should get an Oscar. However, a few problems persist.

"Bowling for Columbine" shows that Americans, even critical ones like Moore, are profoundly obsessed with their own national problems and only minimally expose their government's dictator-loving foreign policy. Americans come first, even in Moore's world. Because of free access to
guns, about 11000 Americans kill each other every year. The subject of guns in America should really include an extended discussion of how America exports weapons of death and misery. The film dwells on the guns-in-America side of this subject without documenting what America does outside America. Moore ought to broaden his horizons. It is possible. (I make a few suggestions on how he might do this).

Diplomatically, and for internationalist balance, Moore inserts very short sequences of how American elites have killed people the world over. However, he does not once mention America's support for the eight-hundred pound free-range gorilla, Ariel Sharon. Is the Israeli genocide of Palestinians less important than guns-are-us homicide in America? Oh, but his film is about guns at home, why should Moore talk about Palestine? This loosely organized film takes many thematic excursions; racism in American; interviews with the makers of South Park; welfare; educational and hilarious cartoon sections on American history et cetera -- so why not a quick trip to Uzi Heaven to interview right-of-return Zionist settlers from Brooklyn and Toronto? Why does Moore *include* a ten second historical clip on the American installation of the Shah of

Iran while *excluding* anything whatsoever on America's current support of Israel? A sense of balance might have been charitable.

The dozy sociologist in Moore awakens: "fear" is media-fed to Americans leading them into a gun culture nested in unbridled greed for running shoes, soft drinks and meat between fibreless white buns. With ugly wall-to-wall muzak behind interviews coupled with very easy-to-get anti-Bush, anti-military laughs, he shows: that Americans have tons of guns; that America is violent; that American elites bomb Aspirin factories in the Third World, whenever they feel like. These are a limited series of conclusions after 125 minutes don't you think? But he is addressing the masses. He has to keep it simple, that way it will get on TV and everyone will vote for Ralph Nader; then we will have wind power. And one by one, the fingernail removing dictators will fall, as the self-repairing ozone saves us, bringing green fields and sunshine in every pot. Moore has to sugarcoat the message. Smug, inactive, intellectuals use such arguments to defend Moore's lack of depth and courage as a documentary film-maker.

Moore uses Canada as a model country. Moore knows Canada like George W. Bush knows the Lake District. He should cultivate a critical view of us, and not hide behind his "I'm-the-sincere-film-maker-next-door" image. Our state run CBC persistently interviews apologists for Israelis: Janice Stein and Norman Spector froth views that are indistinguishable from Golda Meir's. Canada has racist parties: The Canadian Alliance and the Parti Quebecois. Both parties have repeatedly attacked minorities. He should read French-Canadian Lionel Groulx on Jews. Moore wants to give the impression that our politicians are social democrats. Was the 2002 demolition of Tent City in Toronto social democratic politics at its best?

I could not help thinking that Moore, microphone in hand, should go to Ankara, Islamabad (capitals of Turkey and Pakistan, Mr Moore), Kabul and Riyadh to ask the regional lovers of human rights about possible American connections. Would these societies become more or less democratic with or without America's help? Moore's elegant and revelatory questioning methods could be aptly applied to General Prevez Musharraf as well as the America-friendly desert princes who authorize looping off hand and heads with a wink and a nod. He could videotape a Saudi Arabian public beheading and get Condoleesa Rice to make educated comments on it. Ask away, Mr Moore, you're an American. The world's your oyster.

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The Tree That Remembers, directed by Masoud Raouf
50 minutes, 19 seconds; The National Film Board of Canada, 2002
Prize-winning film-maker at the National Film Board of Canada

Film review by Julian Samuel

Canadian-Iranian Filmmaker Masoud Raouf's *The Tree That Remembers* offers
proof that the National Film Board executive producer Sally Bochner is fully committed
to allowing "visible minorities" to make documentaries. This film won the Silver Award
for Best Canadian Documentary at Hot Docs, and Gold Award at Yorktown.

Raouf's effort consists of interviews with Iranian exiles who were imprisoned, tortured,
and who now live in Canada. The film is filled with wall-to-wall interviewees who cry.
Their suffering, which is supposed to touch us on a personal level, is shown without
sustained political or historical analysis except for one or two sentences which offer the
most craven criticism of Canada. What is the point of showing us tears without exploring
the international complicity (and the silence of the corporate mass media) which has
partially contributed to the enormous suffering of Iranians? The film does not expose
how western governments (including ours) silently sell profit-making instruments of
repression to Iran; the Canadian arms industry is never mentioned, the tears flow
endlessly.

In a "globalizing" world the following questions are more relevant than ever: Did our
country, Canada, support Savak and the Shah? Internationally, was Canada sufficiently
vocal in criticizing Iran? What were or are Canada's links with current Iranian regimes?
Do the NFB bosses control the content of this film? These questions, ignored by the
director, are relevant when discussing Iranian suffering past and present.

The Tree That Remembers has not got a central thesis or focus. A suicide is tacked at the
beginning and at the end for perfunctory continuity. Moreover, the camera work is
boringly traditional and the editing transpires without a single international
interconnection, and the comatose animation sections are inserted into the film to stay the
charge of "talking heads" rather than enrich the work.

Years ago, even our gigantically pro-Israeli CBC set the suffering of the people of Iran in
an almost-analytical context (Canadian sales of weapons were not exposed, of course).
Other film-makers have tackled the same subject with more rigour. Rufia Pooya's 1980
film *In Defense of People* elegantly exposed American support for the Shah's violence.
Raouf should have studied Pooya's work before making something that is much worse
that the average CBC documentary on Iran.

By not exposing Canada's role in supporting Iranian dictatorships, sentimental films such
as *The Tree that Remembers* actually perpetuates the suffering of Iranian people; their
suffering is presented as something out there in the far away blue yonder, as something
not connected to Canada. Their suffering is very much connected to what Canada does in

terms of trade relations and foreign policy. This film does a profound disservice to the people who were and who are currently being brutalized; it tries to be poetic rather than expose arms trade deals and bankrupt foreign policy. I am confident that Canadians would pressure their elected politicians to change things if they were given rational information on how Canada, in its own small way, contributes to the suffering.

Julian Samuel

Film-maker and writer Julian Samuel, has made a four- hour documentary on Orientalism and has published a novel, Passage to Lahore (De Lahore à Montréal).
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The Tree that Remembers, directed by Masoud Raouf
Raouf, an Iranian filmmaker reflects on oppression and freedom,
50 minutes, 19 seconds; The National Film Board of Canada, 2002
Prize-winning film-maker at the National Film Board of Canada

Film Review by Pat Dillon

In 1992 a young Iranian student hanged himself from a tree on the outskirts of a small Ontario town. He had escaped the Ayatollahs' regime and found refuge in Canada. Why did he take his own life?

The death hit home with his fellow countryman Masoud Raouf. He too was part of the generation who opposed the Shah's despotic rule - only to be cruelly persecuted by the new regime.

The National Film Board Documentary *The Tree that Remembers* is Raouf's reflection on the betrayal of the 1979 Iranian revolution and the tenacity of the human spirit. The film gets its broadcast debut on TVO's The View From Here at 10:00 pm, Wednesday, May 22, following its world premiere at Toronto's Hot Docs Festival.

Raouf assembles a group of Iranian exiles in Canada - all former political prisoners like himself who were active in the democratic movement. Shekoufeh, petite and soft-spoken, was confined for months in a coffin-like box. Reza, now a professor of economics, wrote about his imprisonment in Weeping Tulips. Firouzeh was separated from her family for years, following a 10-minute trial before a group of fundamentalist clerics.

Blending their testimony with historical footage and original artwork, Raouf honours the memory of the dead and celebrates the resilience of the living.

Framing these accounts are scenes from Iran's recent past. The cruel irony of history is startling in 1979 footage of International Women's Day, where enthusiastic crowds of women take to the streets of Tehran, walking arm-in-arm towards a better tomorrow. Having helped defeat the brutal regime that had come to power in the 1953 CIA-backed

coup, they are buoyant with hope. How could they foresee the dark age about to engulf them?

Throughout Raouf uses his own animated artwork to create an imagined sanctuary, shimmering Fauvist landscapes which offer luminous release from hardship and inhumanity. While anchored in a specific history, *The Tree that Remembers* reflects on oppression and survival, pouring light into a sombre universe and finding unexpected fragments of hope.

The Tree that Remembers was written and directed by Masoud Raouf and produced by the National Film Board of Canada. Sally Bochner is executive producer and Ravida Din is associate producer.

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